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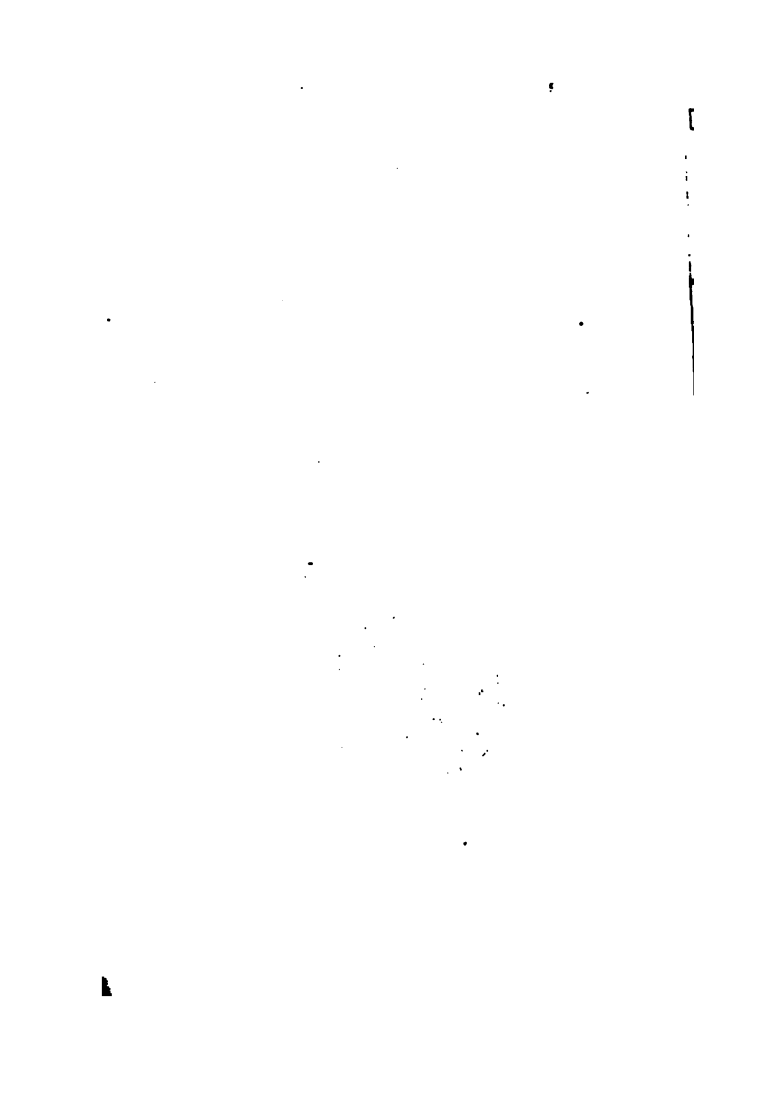
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A
PRECIOUS
SAVIOUR

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A
PRECIOUS SAVIOUR.

BY
HENRY JENNINGS, F.R.S.L.



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This Volume

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY SPECIAL PERMISSION,

TO

THOMAS BARNES, Esq., M.P.,

BY HIS HUMBLE SERVANT,

HENRY JENNINGS.



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P R E F A C E.

I BEG respectfully to state that I offer this volume primarily and chiefly to the young ; however, by its publication, it is placed within the reach of all. The subjects are plain and important ; and, if enforced by the demonstration of the Spirit (which is the only power that can render them practically beneficial), I shall be abundantly rewarded for the time, thought, and pains bestowed upon their preparation.

The great Head of the Church has condescended to bless the perusal of some of my works by the conversion of some poor sinners ; which glorious fact has encouraged me to write and publish more than I otherwise should have done. It has been my aim that sound doctrine and evangelical principles should characterize every part of this book. I have striven to be faithful : I have spoken the

truth in love. Truth and love are two of the most powerful things in the world ; and, when they both go together, they cannot easily be withstood. The golden beams of truth, and the silken cords of love, twisted together, will draw men on with a sweet influence, whether they will or no. May this feeble effort to do good be owned and blessed by the Divine Redeemer, and to him be all the praise. I beg sincerely to thank Thomas Barnes, Esq., M.P. (who is always ready to aid in any good cause), for the honour he has conferred in allowing me to dedicate this work to him.

THE AUTHOR.

JESUS CHRIST A PRECIOUS SAVIOUR.

“**H**IM that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (John vi. 37). What a precious truth for poor sinners ! What a gracious declaration for every desponding, conscience-stricken penitent. The greatest sinner comes within its reach ; the vilest wretch is encouraged to come to the throne of grace : pardon and peace are offered to all who are willing to receive them in the divinely appointed way. The greatest prodigal may return to his father’s house ; he may exchange his mean attire for the best robes his father’s house affords ; he may feast on the choicest dainties, instead of starving upon husks, fitted only for the beasts

of the field. The father stands ready to welcome back his long-lost son. The arms of infinite mercy, of almighty grace and love, are stretched out to embrace every repenting son and daughter of Adam. The poor, the wretched, the blind, the naked, the burdened, the heavy-laden ; the hardened sinner, the aged sinner, the daring sinner, the dying sinner, may come and obtain, through Jesus Christ, forgiveness and eternal salvation, everlasting life and happiness. The poorest and most stammering penitent will be heard, received, and divinely blessed ; for Jesus has said, "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "On no account : whatever there may be against the poor, trembling sinner (if he is the subject of godly sorrow), I will have mercy upon him ; if he be a Saul of Tarsus, a cruel Manasseh, or a blaspheming Newton, I will not refuse to hear him : *I will in no wise cast him out.*" Jesus is ever waiting to be gracious ; he wonders that men should choose death rather than life, and therefore he calls after them, as they are madly rushing on to eternal misery, "Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways : for why will ye die ?" Dear reader, allow me to ask if *you* have turned to Christ Jesus, if *you* have obtained pardon for sin, if *you* are

received into Divine favour ; if not, *why not* ? Are you fearing to approach the Divine Redeemer's throne because of the enormity of your sins ? Do not fear any more ; do not delay coming to Jesus because of your great iniquities : for he has said, "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow ; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "Seek ye the Lord *while* he may be found." *While*: this word suggests that a day is coming when he may be sought and not found. Now is the sinner's only sure time ; it may be *your* only time to secure the blessings of salvation, even eternal life.

"Time's sun is fast setting, its twilight is nigh,
Its evening is falling in cloud o'er the sky ;
Its shadows are stretching in ominous gloom ;
Its midnight approaches—the midnight of doom !
Then haste, sinner, haste, there is mercy for thee,
And wrath is preparing—flee, lingerer, flee !"

No sinner need despair of salvation if he is a true penitent and relies entirely upon the merits of the Divine Redeemer. God's mercy is great, and his justice is glorious. No one should presume upon the one or trifle with

the other ; some have delayed seeking the salvation of their soul until the last few minutes of their earthly existence. What a terrible uncertainty ! Some have been so deluded as to affirm that they should only require, when dying, “ five minutes to cry for mercy.”

“ In the early part of my ministry,” said the Rev. Mr. T. East, of Birmingham, “ a woman was in the habit of attending the place of worship in which I preached, who occupied a seat on the stairs, and who was very tenacious of her sitting, not allowing any other person to occupy it. She was observed by her friends, who sought occasion to converse with her on the important subject of religion ; but she was very shy and evasive. All they could extract from her was this appalling reply : ‘ Oh, I shall only want five minutes’ time when I am dying to cry for mercy ; and I have no doubt God Almighty will give it me.’ It was in vain to remonstrate with the woman ; this was always her reply. Time passed on. One day I was walking down the street, when a young woman ran up to me in a state of great agitation and excitement, exclaiming, ‘ Oh, Mr. East, I have found you. Do come to my mother, sir. Come this minute, *sir ; she is dying, she is dying !*’ I hastened

with her to the house, and was astonished to find in the dying sufferer the poor unhappy woman who had attended my place of worship. She was evidently expiring ; but, turning her dying eyes towards me, she cried out, ‘Oh, Mr. East, I am damned ! I am damned !’ and expired.

“Behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation.” Dear reader, if you form one of that large class of persons who see many difficulties in the way of being saved, allow me, by the help of the Holy Spirit, to try and clear away the difficulties and “show you the path of life.” The offices of the Redeemer are happily suited to your case. Are you not ignorant ? He is the light of the world ; and whosoever followeth him shall not walk in darkness (John viii. 12). He is appointed to be the instructor of man, and through him Divine knowledge is communicated. “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor. iv. 6).

Are you not guilty ? “Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness

of sins" (Acts v. 31). That very law which you have broken he hath repaired—nay, magnified ; that government which you by sin have dishonoured "he hath honoured ; and with his righteousness the Lord is well pleased." By the appointment of his Father, and with his own consent, he became a surety to pay the debt of sin ; the price which he paid was immense, and fully adequate to discharge the debt, and restore you to liberty. We are not "redeemed by corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet. i. 18, 19).

Are you not exposed to Divine justice to be punished for your sins? But of Christ Peter says, "he bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Pet. ii. 24). Trust in the efficacy of his death, and then the words of Paul will be applicable to you—"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1).

Did the lamb, when consumed on the altar, cleanse from ceremonial defilement, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to *serve the living God*" (Heb. ix. 14). The end

of the Saviour's mission is to remove ignorance, cancel guilt, and reconcile man to God: for Jesus died, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18). Listen, then, to one of the greatest prophets: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29).

Do you not groan, being burdened with indwelling sin? Notwithstanding this misery, be encouraged; for Christ is inaugurated King of Saints, and invested with almighty power to save. He hath ascended up on high; he hath received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them (Psa. lxxviii. 18). Recollect, these gifts are for the *rebellious*. Such you have been, but *now* desire to throw down the arms of rebellion. Jesus does *now dwell* with men by the ministration of his Spirit; and he has power to change your heart, power to destroy the dominion of sin, and power to give stability to holiness, till it shall terminate in everlasting glorification. Many a spring has ceased; and when the poor and needy have sought water, they have sought in vain. But our Lord communicates never-failing grace. Read his declaration: "whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall

never thirst ; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John iv. 14).

The blessings of Christ are equal to your greatest wants ; and the power of his Spirit can conquer your most inveterate sins. Perhaps you may object by saying, " These blessings are suitable, but what encouragement have I to seek them ?" I answer, you will be encouraged by reflecting on the dignity and excellence of our Lord Jesus, who thus kindly addresses you : " Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth : for I am God " (Isa. xlv. 22). The birth of Christ was the appearance of God veiled in humanity ; " they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us " (Matt. i. 23) ; he " thought it not robbery to be equal with God " (Phil. ii. 6). His Divine dignity is a solid foundation on which to build your hope ; an undiminished dignity which will survive the existence of this lower world.

It may be observed that immense power, unattended by goodness, is dreadfully terrific ; yet you must grant that when it is united with wisdom, righteousness, and mercy it is calculated *to dissipate fear*. Yes, the wisdom, righteous-

ness, and mercy of Christ soften the splendour of his majesty, and we throw ourselves into the arms of a brother and a Saviour, although he be the mighty God. His wisdom reveals a gospel in every respect suited to the condition of ignorant, guilty, and miserable man. He invites sinners to embrace his gospel, and when a sinner throws himself at his feet, his mercy prompts him to be as gracious as when he addressed the crucified thief: "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke xxiii. 43).

The truth of these remarks can be proved from his life. His wisdom appears in his discourses; his mind was all-penetrating: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb. iv. 12, 13).

Christ is the truth, and truth influences all his undertakings. After having fulfilled his engagements to his Father, so as to drink the

very dregs of the cup of his anger, will he be faithless? Will he not rise from his throne to receive the penitent whom he has redeemed by his blood?

As to his mercy, proofs of this abound. Stand by him whilst he heals the sick, gives sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, and life to the dead. See him at the grave of Lazarus, and witness his tears shed over Jerusalem. Follow him from Gethsemane's garden to Calvary, and witness his sufferings for sinners; the weight of our guilt falling on his soul and body, unutterable, and, to any one but God manifest in the flesh, intolerable. O afflicted and despairing sinner! where can a Saviour be found possessing such wisdom, truth, and mercy? Doubt not his willingness to save. Why should you increase the magnitude of your sins by unbelief? Come with all your ignorance. Come with all your guilt. Come with all your indwelling sin; for he saith, "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37).

The intercession of Jesus is an additional circumstance, and worthy of your attention. When he died he proved his willingness to save, *and his intercession* is that willingness per-

petuated. When Stephen beheld our Lord in heaven, he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts vii. 55, 56). That his influence is great appears from the place where he intercedes: it is at the right hand of God; and, whilst standing at that honourable place, Christ asks for the stipulated reward of his sufferings; for the Father has promised to him that "he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand" (Isa. liii. 10); therefore the soul that believes in him shall not perish.

Jesus is likewise the only begotten Son of God. God has many sons, but only one who is only begotten; there is no other so nearly related to God. It is his only begotten Son, in whom he is *well pleased*, who never has, and who never will, present a petition with which his Father will not be delighted. A father and a son may live in affection, and yet differ in judgment; but here is the union of knowledge, judgment, affection, and will. By the Father and Son the same design is pursued, their conduct regulated by the same rules; and what is the will of the Father is also the will of the Son,

whosoever, therefore, believeth on the Son of God hath eternal life (John iii. 15).

That there is a union of design, as well as of knowledge, judgment, and affection, is also evident from John vi. 40: "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life." To which may be added another declaration of the Saviour's in the same discourse: "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me" (John vi. 57). Thus, as all the blessings of redemption originate with the Father, and Christ, as Mediator, derives them from him, Jesus Christ is to those who believe in him what his Father is to him; so that all the blessings of redemption flow from the Father to the Saviour, and from the Saviour to his disciples. There is therefore but one way in which you can meet the mutual design of the Saviour and his Father; and that is by believing on him whom the Father hath sent to be the Saviour of the world.

Jesus Christ is more precious to the believer than all earthly friends. When the pious Bishop Beveridge was on his death-bed, he did *not recognise any* of his friends. A minister

with whom he had been well acquainted visited him, and when conducted into his room he said, "Bishop Beveridge, do you know me?" "Who are you?" said the bishop. Being told who the minister was, he said that he did not know him. Another friend came who had been equally well known, and accosted him in a similar manner: "Do you know me, Bishop Beveridge?" "Who are you?" said he. Being told it was one of his intimate friends, he said he did not know him. His wife then came to his bed-side and asked him if he knew her. "Who are you?" said he. Being told she was his wife, he said he did not know her. "Well," said one of them, "Bishop Beveridge, do you know the Lord Jesus Christ?" "Jesus Christ!" said he, reviving, as if the name had produced upon him the influence of a charm; "oh, yes! I have known him these forty years; precious Saviour, he is my only hope!"

Dear reader, have you found Jesus to be a precious Saviour to your soul? He lived and died in order to make the sinner's salvation complete. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins" (Acts v. 31). He is thus advanced, as Prince and Mediator,

to the grandeur and resources of the noblest station—not only to govern, but to save ; and to save by governing. Some are exalted as princes who are by no means saviours. They do not study to secure the common rights of mankind. They do not set examples of temperance, humanity, and social affection. They do not cultivate harmony and peace. They seem only raised up to oppress and to destroy. Murder and desolation mark their progress. The ruins of towns and villages, the tears of widows and orphans, are the materials of their glory. They sacrifice the lives of their subjects to save their own : yea, they frequently sacrifice them to gratify their pride, their vanity, their avarice, their revenge. But *He* sacrificed himself for the welfare of his subjects ; “ I give my flesh for the life of the world.” They are princes of war ; but he is “ the Prince of peace.” They are princes of death ; but he is “ the Prince of life.” They are princes and destroyers ; but he is “ a Prince and a Saviour.” He takes us under the wing of his protection ; redeems us from the curse of the law ; delivers us from the wrath to come ; saves us from our sins. He makes his subjects holy and happy ; for “ he gives *repentance* unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins.”

The sparing and pardoning mercy of God in Christ Jesus is beyond all parallel and all praise.

“ My people are bent to backsliding from me : though they called them to the Most High, none at all would exalt him. How shall I give thee up, Ephraim ? how shall I deliver thee, Israel ? how shall I make thee as Admah ? how shall I set thee as Zeboim ? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim : for I am God, and not man ” (Hosea xi. 7—9).

“ Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage ? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us ; he will subdue our iniquities ; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea ” (Micah vii. 18, 19).

So numerous are our offences, and so violent our provocations, that, were not the blessed God equally superior to us in goodness as he is in power, and in pardoning mercy as he is in wisdom, we could not have the least ground of hope. But he is God, and not man. His thoughts as to pardoning mercy are not our

thoughts ; nor his ways of forgiveness like our ways. Offences comparable to a debt of only fifty pence are often with difficulty forgiven by us ; while he, through the blood of atonement, freely forgives a debt of ten thousand talents.

The ancient Hebrews, when representing an object as unusually great, admirable, or awful, frequently employ as an epithet one or another of those names by which the Creator himself stands revealed. Thus, for example, stupendous elevations of the earth are called the mountains of God ; terrible thunders, the voices of God ; stately cedars, the trees of Jehovah ; and Eden, the garden of God, or the garden of Jehovah (Psa. xxxvi. 6 ; Exod. ix. 28 ; Psa. civ. 16 ; Ezek. xxviii. 13 ; Isa. li. 3). This emphatic mode of speaking is also used in strong expressions of benevolence among mortals. For thus Jonathan to David : thou "shalt shew me the kindness of the Lord ;" and thus the man after God's own heart, concerning the family of his most inveterate enemy : "Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him ?" (1 Sam. xx. 14 ; 2 Sam. ix. 3). Steadily fervent, however, as the love of David to Jonathan was, and *nobly disinterested* as his affectionate concern

for the happiness of Saul's descendants appears to have been, yet, when compared with the kindness of God to his apostate creatures, they sink into shade.

The forgiveness that is with God is such as becomes him, such as accords with his greatness, goodness, and all other excellencies of his nature; so that therein he will be known to be God. What he says concerning some of the works of his providence—"Be still, and know that I am God"—may be said concerning this great effect of his grace; quiet your souls, and know that he is God. It is not like that narrow, difficult, halving, and manacled forgiveness that is found amongst men; but it is full, free, bottomless, boundless, absolute; as becomes his nature and excellencies. It is, in a word, forgiveness that is with God, and by the exercise whereof he will be known so to be.

For the most part, when we come to deal with God about forgiveness, we hang in every brier of disputing, quarrelsome unbelief. This or that circumstance, or aggravation, this or that unparalleled particular strips us of our confidence. Want of due consideration of Him with whom we have to do, measuring him by the line of our own imaginations, bringing him

down to our thoughts and our ways, is the cause of all our disquiet. Because we find it hard to forgive our pence, we think he cannot forgive talents. But he hath provided against such thoughts. "I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man" (Hosea xi. 9). Our satisfaction in this matter is to be taken from his nature. Were he a man, or as the sons of men, it were impossible that, upon such and so many provocations, he should turn away from the fierceness of his anger. But he is God. This gives an infiniteness and an inconceivable boundlessness to the forgiveness that is with him, and exalts it above all our thoughts and ways.

A poor, thoughtless man was taken ill, and sent for the minister of his parish to visit him. He then professed to be very penitent; but he recovered, and again fell into his evil courses. A second time he was ill, and the same promises were held out, but never realized. Six times was this the case in the course of his life. At length, while engaged in sin, he was cut off suddenly, and entered into an eternal world. Reader, "*to-day*" hear the voice of God, and *harden not thine heart*. We see our neighbours

fall ; we turn pale at the shock, and feel, perhaps, a trembling dread. No sooner are they removed from our sight, but, driven in the whirl of business, or lulled in the languors of pleasure, we forget the providence, and neglect its errand. The impression made on our unstable minds is like the trace of an arrow through the penetrated air, or the path of a keel in the furrowed wave. Yet how thin is the partition between this world and another ! How short the transition from time to eternity ! The partition, nothing more than the breath in our nostrils ; and the transition may be made in the twinkling of an eye. Legions, legions of disasters, such as no prudence can foresee, and no care prevent, lie in wait to accomplish our doom. A startled horse may throw his rider ; may at once dash his body against the stones, and send his soul into the invisible world. A stack of chimneys may fall into the street, and crush the unwary passenger under the ruins. Even a single tile, dropping from the roof, may be as fatal as the fall of the whole structure. So frail, so attenuated is the thread of life, that it not only bursts before the storm, but breaks even at a breeze. The most common occurrences, those from which we suspect not the least harm, may prove the

weapons of our destruction. A grape-stone, a despicable fly, may be more deadly than Goliath, with all his formidable armour. Nay, if God give command, our very comforts become killing. The air we breathe is our bane, and the food we eat the vehicle of death. That last enemy has unnumbered avenues for his approach ; yea, lies intrenched in our very bosom, and holds his fortress in the seat of our life. The crimson fluid, which distributes health, is impregnated with the seeds of death. Heat may inflame it, or toil oppress it, and make it destroy the parts it was designed to cherish. Some unseen impediment may obstruct its passage, or some unknown violence may divert its course ; in either of which cases it acts the part of a poisonous draught or a deadly stab.

“ Ah ! in what perils is vain life engaged !
What slight neglects, what trivial faults, destroy
The hardest frame ! Of indolence, of toil,
We die ; of want, of superfluity.
The all-surrounding heaven, the vital air,
Is big with death.”

Since, then, we are so liable to be dispossessed of this earthly tabernacle, let us look upon ourselves only as tenants at will, and hold ourselves *in perpetual readiness* to depart at a moment's

warning. Without such an habitual readiness, we are like wretches that sleep on the top of a mast, while a horrid gulf yawns, or furious waves rage, below. And where can be the peace, what the satisfaction, of such a state? Whereas a prepared condition will inspire a cheerfulness of temper, not to be dismayed by any alarming accident, and create a firmness of mind, not to be overthrown by the most threatening dangers. When the city is fortified with walls, furnished with provision, guarded by able and resolute troops, what have the inhabitants to fear? what may they not enjoy? So, or rather by a much surer band, are connected the real taste of life and the constant thought of death.

How necessary to know Jesus as our Saviour; how comforting amid all our trials to have Jesus as our friend; how blessed to know Jesus as "the way, the truth, and the life." Who can wonder if all believers say, "Thou art our Precious Saviour; we esteem thee as the chief among ten thousand, the altogether lovely. A Precious Saviour in life we find thee, and we know we shall find thee to be a Precious Saviour in the hour of death; for when health and strength fail us, thou wilt be our portion for ever." Dear reader, can you say experimentally that Jesus Christ is

a Precious Saviour? if not, pray and wrestle with him until he say to you, "I am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer." He is precious to all who believe on him with their whole heart. He stands between the saint and his enemies, and so great is his love to all believers that he would rather suffer than they should be injured.

Jesus Christ loves his people with an everlasting love: if we are his children we shall love him beyond our nearest relatives. It is laid down in Scripture as a certain proof of the sincerity of our love to the blessed Saviour, that we "love his appearance," that is, the manifestation of his glory to our souls, whether in this or in the next world. God's favour alone is the believer's life; and his gracious presence, sensibly manifested in Christ to the soul, is the proof that he gives of his good-will. It is this which satisfies the soul with marrow and fatness. It is this he pants and longs for, as "the hart after the water brooks," when he has lost it. It is this which is the believer's support; without which, he faints; sustained by which, he goes forward in duty, and on his way rejoicing. By a cold, careless, and negligent walking, the believer often so far grieves the Holy Ghost, *who alone can shed abroad God's love in*

the heart, as to cause him to withhold the sensible manifestation of God's love in Christ. But, when in this sad state, can he be comfortable and easy? Can anything in the compass of the whole universe supply the want of this in any degree? No; as well might darkness supply the absence of light, or misery the absence of happiness! He counts *all* other things, in competition with this, but loss and trash. He rejects and abhors them. And in proportion to the degree of his love to God is his uneasiness at his absence. In such a condition, how do we find David's soul breathing, panting, longing after God? "His heart and flesh cried out for the living God." The spouse in the Canticles, when through her carelessness and sloth she had caused her Beloved to withdraw from her, felt all the misery which distracting passions could inflict; which are always heightened in proportion to the excellency of the object on which they are fixed. She called, but he gave her no answer. Her soul fainted. She sought him, but could not find him! A distressing condition indeed! What can be conceived more so?

O blessed Saviour! how can a soul who has seen thy loveliness and glory, who has *tasted* of thy goodness, support existence with-

out the smiles of thy countenance? The sight of God manifested in the flesh is the most gracious and lovely sight that the eyes of sinners ever can behold. Oh, how can their hearts help burning with gratitude and love! It is indeed so mysteriously wonderful that the angels can find nothing in heaven like it, and therefore, as it were, forget the proper glories of their own station, to look into, admire, and adore this unparalleled instance of love, condescension, and grace. They sing, at the view of it, "Glory to God in the highest."

It is this that overpowers the heart of the believer, dwells upon his soul, bears all earthly things away before it, and fills him with real gratitude and joy, that he could *do* anything, suffer anything, lose everything for Jesus' sake. He is waiting, expecting, longing for the transporting day when Christ shall appear to his longing eyes with full glory, when he shall see him, and be for ever with the Lord! *For ever* with the Lord! Oh comfortable words to the soul that sincerely loves him! *For ever* with the Lord! This is the utmost extent of his wishes. It is the happiness of the believer to do and to suffer for Christ here, and be *for ever* with him *hereafter*. May this happiness be yours and

mine ! Experience convinces me that, if I am not enabled to live the few days I have to live on earth to the glory of God, I shall infallibly carry a hell of misery within my bosom. "Necessity is laid on me." I have no alternative left me. My heart rejoices at the thought. My eyes overflow with tears of joy ! Oh, the privilege, the honour of being God's servants ! How infinitely more so to be his sons and heirs !

Jesus Christ is a Precious Saviour unto all who rightly believe on him ; not merely regarded as some proper and valuable resource for the time to come, but held in present estimation. "To you which believe, he is precious."

Which believe : it is to believers on earth. He may indeed be, and doubtless is, precious to the angels and saints in heaven, who gaze on the brightness of his unveiled glories—precious as the theme of their undying song. He is precious to the Father. "The Father loveth the Son. When he bringeth in the first-born into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him." He was precious in angelic estimation when they announced his birth to the shepherds : "Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all

people ; for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." The listening shepherds heard the song chanted by a multitude of the heavenly host, "Glory to God in the highest ; on earth peace, goodwill toward men." What a birth-song ! Had not the court of heaven, think ye, some high estimation of Him who was now "wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger" ? This humiliation seems not in the least to have lessened their estimation of him. "Angels came and ministered unto him" after he had "fasted forty days and forty nights" and been "tempted of the devil." When he agonized in the bloody sweat of Gethsemane—"Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me"—"an angel appeared unto him, strengthening him." And they did not abandon him when he was laid in the tomb : an angel rolled back the stone, while the affrighted earth trembled and quaked.

Thus you perceive that you are not alone in your attachment to Jesus Christ. If to believers he is precious, so he is to those who never fell from heaven's high eminence and lost the holiness of their nature. And if you are fond of *accompanying* him in the garden, or of musing

over his sepulchre, so were angels. If you are fond of chanting his praises, so are angels. He has now gone back to heaven, and the angels tune their harps to his glory. "I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

"To you which believe, he is precious." *Which believe.* And is he then precious to them only? Are there no others to whom he is precious? No; none. "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." It is to those who believe that Jesus is precious. This is the declaration of the inspired penman; and we dare not alter or obscure its sense. We have, then, this sentiment, that faith is necessary in order to have such a regard for Jesus Christ that he can with propriety be called precious to us. It is not improbable that some who have no faith are hoping still, in some way, to be saved through Christ, and therefore do not and dare not openly con-

temn his doctrines and the offers of his grace. But they openly neglect them, and while they continue to do so they have not the sentiment that Christ is precious. This is a sentiment of faith, and without faith it has no existence. The converse of the proposition is equally true. In whatever heart faith exists there this sentiment of the preciousness of Christ exists. Faith has not existence in any heart to which Christ is not precious.

Dear reader, do you feel Jesus Christ to be precious to you now? Can you say, "He was wounded for my transgressions"? Do you know experimentally that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin"? Look to him and to him alone: for "he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. i. 21). Consider what encouragement there is for you to repent, to come to Jesus and be saved: he has said, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Isa. xliii. 25). Can you say—

Jesus, thy love alone, alone thy love

Refresheth me ;

And for that love of thine, that freshening love,

I come to thee.

is thy cross alone, alone thy cross
That healeth me ;
and for that cross of thine, that healing cross,
I come to thee.

is thy blood alone, alone thy blood
That cleanseth me ;
and for that blood of thine, that cleansing
blood,
I come to thee.

is thy death alone, alone thy death
That quickeneth me ;
and for that death of thine, that quickening
death,
I come to thee.

is thy life alone, alone thy life
That saveth me ;
and for that life of thine, that saving life,
I come to thee.

is thy strength alone, alone thy strength
That strengthens me ;
and for that strength of thine, that strengthen-
ing strength,
I come to thee.

It is thy joy alone, alone thy joy
That gladdens me :
And for that joy of thine, that gladdening joy,
I come to thee.

It is thy light alone, alone thy light
That cheereth me ;
And for that light of thine, that cheering light,
I come to thee.

Jesus, thy grace alone, alone thy grace
Sufficeth me ;
And for that grace, that all-sufficing grace,
I come to thee.

Saviour, 'tis thou thyself, alone thyself,
Art all to me ;
And for that all, of everything I need,
I come to thee.

JESUS CHRIST A WILLING SAVIOUR.

“**L**OOK unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth” (Isa. xlv. 22). “Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.” “We shall be saved by his life.” What encouraging promises are these, dear reader ! Truly Jesus Christ is a precious and a willing Saviour for all who believe. Sinners raise objections to being saved, but Christ raises none : he strives to remove all, and to make the way of salvation plain and easy. But there is no salvation without sorrow for iniquity : pardon and penitence are inseparable ; for the Lord Jesus never bestows one without communicating the other. “Him hath God exalted as a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance

and the remission of sins." Permit me to ask, Are you convinced that you have acted foolishly, unjustly, unholily, and ungratefully? Does the remembrance of it fill you with confusion, grief, and anger? Would you, if possible, restore the characters you have blasted, recall the oaths you have sworn, give back the property you have taken, and raise to life whom you have destroyed? Are you willing, without reserve, to devote yourself to the service of God? I do not ask for tears—for penitence may exist without them—but whether this change of mind is accompanied by shame and remorse, mingled with wonder, on account of the goodness, mercy, and patience of God.

Before consolation is administered, I must ask, Are you willing to leave the practice of those sins, the remembrance of which grieves you? To be sorry for sin, without forsaking it, is to acknowledge our crimes without proving our sincerity, and to express our pain for disloyalty whilst we persist in rebellion; in fact, it is the essence of hypocrisy. Repentance and conversion cannot be separated; they are often with difficulty distinguished. Forsaking sin is not the cause of pardon; because ceasing from *present sin* does not obliterate past offences;

yet is there such an intimate connection between salvation and departing from iniquity, that no one, at the peril of his soul, dares disunite them. "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die ; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right ; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity ; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him" (Ezek. xxxiii. 14, 15, 16). God having, in the merciful constitution of his Gospel, united the forsaking of sin and its forgiveness, "he hath done that which is lawful and right ; he shall surely live."

The design of salvation would be incomplete without conversion. And, if there be in you no desires to hate sin and love holiness, cease to receive the encouragement here presented ; for Jesus Christ not only died to pardon sin, but also to promote holiness. "God hath sent his Son Jesus Christ to bless you in turning every one of you from his iniquities."

I have but one more question to ask. Will you apply to God, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, for pardon ? That man is much to be pitied who has heard from the lips of a

Christian minister little more than the duties between man and man ; or, should he have heard of duties to God, heard them sadly misstated as to their nature, their extent, the motives by which they should be performed, and the heavenly influence essential to comply with them ; where he has heard attributed to repentance that which solely belongs to the death of the Saviour, and to almsgiving the virtue which belongs to the intercession of the Son of God.

Hitherto it may be you have asked nothing in the name of Christ. You have every encouragement to apply. "Ask, and ye shall receive" (John xvi. 24). As there is no other name under heaven given amongst men, whereby you may be saved, confess your ignorance, and seek his instruction ; acknowledge your guilt, and, by relying on his mediation, be justified by his righteousness. State in prayer your inability to live holily, and supplicate his power to subdue your sins. If then, my anxious friend, you can aver that the remembrance of sin grieves you, that you wish to depart from iniquity, and will cheerfully take Christ as your only Saviour, rejecting everything besides as dust and ashes, *in comparison* of the wisdom of his counsels,

and the perfection of his righteousness, I assert that the magnitude of sin is not to be considered an insuperable barrier to salvation.

The magnitude of sin is not to be considered as an insuperable barrier to salvation. It is certainly true that God is just—awfully just; the eternal punishment of sinners does not make him less inflexible; for the unalterable decrees of justice are regulated by wisdom and holiness: none more wise or righteous can be substituted in their place. Yet, trembling sinner, despair not. Follow me to Calvary. Behold that cross. The Scripture says of this person, “Him God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (Rom. iii. 25, 26). Yes, it is the design of God to save great sinners. Look on that justice which kindles the fire of hell, which inflicts miseries eternal and unalterable, in punishing those who have heaped up wrath against the day of wrath and righteous revelation of God. That same justice which is now restrained by patience, and waits the day when, turning the key of his dread arsenal, a

conflagration, extensive and resistless, drives the nations into hell, and all the people who forget God,—O penitent sinner, that same justice secures your salvation. God is just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus.

That it is the design of God to save great sinners will appear from the Lord's sending the Gospel to places and to men the most sinful. Noah was raised up when it was recorded that "the iniquity of man was great in the earth," so great, that "it repented the Lord that he had made man—it grieved him at his heart;" yet one hundred and twenty years the patriarch continued among them "a preacher of righteousness." Lot was placed in impure Sodom. Moses was sent to Israel when sunk in the lowest depths of idolatry. "In the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands : then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt : I am the Lord your God. But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto *me* : they did not every man cast away the

abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. But I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen, among whom they were, in whose sight I made myself known unto them, in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt" (Ezek. xx. 6—9).

Advancing in our progress, we see Samuel commencing his ministry amidst the dreadful corruptions of the sons of Eli. Nathan proclaims mercy to an adulterous murderer: "The Lord also hath put away thy sin" (2 Sam. xii. 13). The Son of God appears in the fulness of time, and that time was the fulness of iniquity. In Judea the traditions of men had erased the truths of God. The Roman empire, palsied by effeminacy, vice, and idolatry, forsaken by the most virtuous of her citizens, oppressed by the wealth of Eastern nations, and still more oppressed by Eastern iniquities, changed her ancient purity of manners until the courts of her princes became the fountains of all unhallowed passions; yet neither Jerusalem nor Rome was forsaken by God: the great sin prevented not the descent of Divine mercy. Behold in Judea Christ and

his apostles preaching peace on earth and goodwill to men ; Peter writing to the Jews scattered through Pontus, Galatia, and Bythinia ; Paul proclaiming the glorious gospel of the blessed God at Rome, Philippi, Corinth, Ephesus, Miletus ; and thus from Jerusalem, all around to Illyricum, declaring that it was the design of God to save great sinners.

To make the subject more definite—the man whom God most honoured was a great sinner. Those who represent Paul as a good man before his conversion differ greatly in judgment from the apostle ; and Paul would have scorned to have abased himself that his humility might be celebrated. He was also void of an overweening modesty. He would not hide the extent of his labours, lest others might lose the benefit of his example, and therefore says, “I am not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles” (2 Cor. xi. 5).

Let us read the history of his conversion, narrated by himself. After praising Christ for his elevation to the ministry of the Gospel, he adds, “Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious ; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly, in unbelief, and the *grace of our Lord* was exceeding abundant with

faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus." Compare this with his history as mentioned by Luke : " I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem : and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests ; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme ; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities " (Acts xxvi. 9, 10, 11). Will men strive to remove the moral turpitude of blasphemy and murder ? To this it may be answered that his ignorance cancelled his crimes. " I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief " (1 Tim. i. 13). Murder is murder, whether it be the result of civil policy, the offspring of ecclesiastical tyranny, or the gratification of savage revenge ; whether the murderer be a resident in the land of civilization, or among a horde of barbarians. The sin may, by ignorance, be extenuated, but cannot be cancelled. That the guilt of Paul could not have been so great as if he had understood the nature and believed the truth of Christianity, and that he

had not offended to that extent as to constitute the offence the sin against the Holy Ghost, may be admitted as a reason why he obtained mercy. To this dreadful offence he probably alludes. Yet we must contend that his ignorance and unbelief—for both should be taken together—neither cancelled his guilt nor procured mercy. Let his own assertion be the proof: “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners ; of whom *I am chief*” (1 Tim. i. 15).

In those links of dependence, in reviewing which we are apt to confound cause and effect, we ought carefully to distinguish between what is the primary and what is the secondary cause ; what is the last, the chief, the superior and inferior cause. These things attended to will remove the difficulty in the passage which has excited the ingenuity of critics and perplexed the votaries of polemical divinity.

The following remarks are submitted to the judgment of the reader. The glory of God in creation, providence, and redemption is the last end of Jehovah. “He hath made all things for his own glory.” There can be no exertion in creation, no event in providence, nor any blessing of redemption received by man but will

ultimately terminate in the glory of God. Thus sung the angels of heaven when the birth of Jesus was announced, at the commencement of a new empire, the empire of the Son of God: "Glory to God in the highest;" which is the last end of Jehovah, both in creation, providence, and redemption.

In subservience to this last end of Jehovah, the chief cause of man's redemption, although but secondary in relation to the primary cause, is the mediation of our Saviour. To this mediation is attributed the possession of all the blessings of grace which we enjoy here, and all the blessings of glory which we shall enjoy hereafter. It is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his own mercy, he hath saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he hath shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Lord. He is therefore justly called our Redeemer, being the chief cause of our present and future felicity.

Considering the divine glory as the ultimate end of Jehovah in the redemption of man, and that glory secured through the mediation of Jesus Christ, a third cause of the salvation of man is the ministration of the Holy Ghost.

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“He hath saved us by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

And here it may be necessary to remark that the mediation of Jesus Christ should be considered as preceding the ministration of the Spirit, which it actually did, although the death of our Lord did not transpire till thousands of years had passed since the fall of man ; so that, through Jesus Christ, or on account of his mediation, both before and since his death, man has, and still continues to be, saved ; and this salvation is effected when the Spirit, by his influence, unites man to the Saviour by a living faith, and thereby makes him a partaker of the blessings of redemption.

A fourth cause of salvation, in subservience to those which have already been mentioned, is the conversion of other sinners. “For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.” It frequently happens that the conversion of one sinner leads to the conversion of many. Paul himself was an eminent instance of it ; the conversion of no one ever appeared to have been in this respect *so effectual*.

One more cause, which, like those which precede, and which is dependent on the primary cause, is that of a man not having sinned beyond the reach of the mercy of the Gospel. To this cause the apostle attributes the salvation of the murderers of Christ. "And now brethren I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers ;" concluding that their ignorance mitigated their guilt, so as to prevent their being placed beyond the reach of mercy. He then adds, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." In the same sense I would modestly affirm that Paul declares, "For this cause I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." Although his ignorance did not cancel his guilt, it was a mitigation of its criminality ; he was the chief amongst sinners who were saved ; "but there is a sin unto death." This Paul had not committed ; he was, therefore, within the boundaries of the grace of the Gospel.

The unbelief of Paul was inexcusable ; he knew that, at the time of the Saviour's crucifixion, the vail of the temple had been rent in twain, the earth had trembled, the rocks had been rent, the sun darkened, and that that darkness was contrary to the general laws of creation.

Could Paul have been altogether ignorant of the miracles of Jesus? Could a minister of the Sanhedrim, and a cruel servant of the chief priests, have been ignorant of the secret of bribing the guards, to conceal the resurrection of Jesus from the populace? Were these things not admissible, one instance was sufficient to have rendered him inexcusable. When Stephen was martyred, the murderers "laid their clothes at the feet of a young man, whose name was Saul." And when the apostle confessed his sins before the Lord Jesus, this circumstance he selected as an instance of his own wickedness: "Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee; and when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him." He that could resist the evidence which arose from the martyrdom of Stephen must have been willingly ignorant, and criminally unbelieving.

Nor did his ignorance procure him mercy. He might have been wiser had he examined the evidences of Christianity, and implored the assistance of God in that examination. The *cause of his* mercy is stated best by himself:

“ For this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Christ Jesus might shew forth all long-suffering towards those who should hereafter believe in his name.” The more profane, malevolent, and inexcusable Paul was, previous to his conversion, the fitter object he was to encourage the hopes of penitent sinners.

Look at this man, this blaspheming murderer, this tool of a malevolent Sanhedrim, and behold with wonder the triumph of mercy over iniquity. Whilst breathing destruction, he is arrested in his career, not to be consigned to unutterable woe, but to be pardoned, to be selected to fill the most honourable office in the Christian church. Read what the Lord says to the objections of Ananias in relation to this man : “ Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem : and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way : for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel ” (1 Tim. i. 16 ; Acts ix. 13—15). Think, my reader, as the apostle thought, that his conversion was such a stupendous instance of mercy that no person,

however sinful, but might be encouraged to believe, through his obtaining mercy. He was not insensible of those powers with which he was endowed; he says, "I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles." Yet the remembrance of his guilt previous to his conversion was never erased from his mind: "for I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God" (1 Cor. xv. 9). "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given" (Eph. iii. 8).

Yet was this man of all men the most honoured. No one was ever blessed with such extensive usefulness; no one was ever caught up to the third heavens, and returned again: other men went but to the tops of mountains, but Paul to the paradise of God. Come, then, to Jesus and be happy: the Saviour of the apostle has abundant mercy.

We leave the apostle, but proceed to show, from the salvation of the thief on the cross, that it is the design of God to save great sinners. How valuable is an immortal soul! The decrees of God, the arrangements of his providence, the mission of his Son, the descent of his Spirit, the *inspiration* of his prophets and apostles, and

the perpetuity of all the means of grace, prove it. How willing is God to save a soul from death ! In the instance before us this is peculiarly exemplified. A poor, wicked, wretched criminal is led to die on the hill of Calvary, at the very time that our Lord was about to suffer for our salvation. He was fastened to the cross, and, uniting with a suffering companion, even while death looked him hard in the face, he railed and cast contemptuous expressions on Jesus. "And they that were crucified with him, reviled him" (Mark xv. 52 ; Matt. xxvii. 44 ; Luke xxiii. 42, 43). The Spirit of the Most High smote his heart with convictions (what cannot God achieve ?) ; he recognises Jesus as the Saviour of the world : "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." At this time was the guilt of the whole world lying on the body and soul of Jesus ; he had heard the taunting language of the petitioner.

Troubled soul ! hadst thou been in the place of this wicked man, couldst thou have expected mercy ? What ! when the very heavens and the earth trembled before the Lord, great wrath having gone forth from his throne ! Read the Saviour's answer : "To-day shalt thou be with

me in paradise." The heart of Jesus, when agonized with pain, felt for the misery of a penitent sinner ; and he, whose hands were nailed to the cross, "plucked his petitioner as a brand from the everlasting burnings." What may not now be expected from him, who is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour? You will find the same Jesus on the throne who once said to the thief from the cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

A few days from the crucifixion had only elapsed when the great Head of the Church presented other incidents for your encouragement. You will find that the first trophies of grace, after the death of Christ, were great sinners. Forty days intervened between the resurrection and ascension, during which time Jesus Christ revealed a truth, tremendous in its consequences, to impenitent sinners : "All power is given unto me, in heaven and on earth" (Matt. xxviii. 18). What will become of the inhabitants of Jerusalem? This is surely the tolling of the knell of their destruction. Oh! that thou "hadst known in this thy day the things that belong unto thy peace, but now *they* are for ever hid from thine eyes." Destruction awaits them : the prelude to the storm

was given a few days since. The sun blushed, gathered blackness, shuddered, and hid his face. Calvary trembled beneath the cross. The hill of Zion felt it, it reached the inmost recesses of the temple, and the vail was rent in twain. The pious dead heard it, came out of their graves astonished, and asked if it were the general resurrection.

A God of justice may avenge himself, but Jesus is a Saviour ; he is mighty, not to destroy, but to save. Look, distressed sinner, on your Lord ; hear his commands relative to Jerusalem : “And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day : and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you : but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued

with power from on high" (Luke xxiv. 44—49). In these verses there are two things which particularly demand your attention. They were to begin their ministrations at Jerusalem, and at Jerusalem to wait for the extraordinary influences of the Holy Ghost.

At the time appointed, Peter opens the merciful commission of Heaven: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy *footstool*. Therefore, let all the house of Israel

know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation " (Acts ii. 22—24, and 32—40).

Now let us inquire what were the fruits of the apostle's labours. "And the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls." Why were not those, who, by wicked hands, had crucified our Lord, punished according to the just deserts of their iniquities? Because Jesus prayed for them: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." He prays for you. Who can tell but he that drove the nails, those who elevated the cross, and he that pierced his side were among the number? If there was compassion in the heart of Christ to

save his murderers, why should you despair? If God has opened your eyes to see the magnitude of sin, and penetrated your heart with contrition, you have nothing to dread, except despairing of the mercy of your Redeemer.

To close this argument, it may be added that the righteous, before their conversion, are represented as having been great sinners. If a body of saints can be collected who had been great sinners, you will allow that the magnitude of sin is not an insuperable barrier to salvation, because, from their conversion, it is apparently the design of God to save great sinners. Could you magnify your guilt so as to oppose single instances of Divine mercy, what can you say when Abraham, David, Manasseh, Paul, the thief on the cross, the murderers of Jesus Christ, and the church of Corinth stand before you? Of these Corinthians, Paul thus speaks: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such *were some of you*: but ye are washed, but ye

are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. vi. 9—11). Trust in the same Saviour, and you will inherit the same blessings ; for he is *willing* and "*able* to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." Remember, dear reader, that no one but Jesus Christ can save you ; that the world cannot give you peace ; that Jesus Christ will give you the peace which passeth all understanding, if you ask him. He is the eternal Son of God.

A poor man, unable to read, who obtained his livelihood by mending shoes, was asked by an Arian minister how he knew that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. "Sir," he replied, "I am sorry you have put such a question to me before my children, although I think I can give you a satisfactory answer. You know, sir, when I first became concerned about my soul, and unhappy on account of my sins, I called upon you to ask for your advice, and you told me to get into company, and spend my time as merrily as I could, but not to go to hear the Methodists." "I did so," answered the ungodly minister. "I followed your advice," continued the illiterate cobbler, "for some time ;

but the more I trifled, the more my misery increased ; and at last I was persuaded to hear one of those Methodist ministers who came into our neighbourhood and preached Jesus Christ as the Saviour. In the greatest agony of mind, I prayed to him to save me, and to forgive my sins ; and now I feel that he has freely forgiven them ; and by this I know that he is the Son of God."

Wisdom's "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Religion makes persons truly happy ; no one can be united to the Divine Redeemer without being unspeakably happy.

Consider how wicked the heart is that can find more pleasure in sin than in God and holiness ; that can find the creature pleasant, and God unpleasant. What a shame is this to your understanding and will ! What a shame to the understanding is it to value darkness rather than light ! and what a shame to the will to choose death rather than life ! What a shame to both that the worst things are more pleasant than the best ! If you had no more wit than to be pleased more with husks than *with* meat, and more with nakedness than with *clothing*, you would not be reckoned wise

enough to be left to your own disposal and government ; and yet here the folly that you manifest is unspeakably greater, when you are more pleased with feeding upon swine's food than upon heavenly manna, and have more pleasure in exposing your shameful nakedness to the world than in being clothed with a heavenly robe—a robe of perfect righteousness for your justification, and a robe of grace and holiness for your sanctification. O sinner, you have a God of infinite goodness to delight in, and you have liberty to come to him ; you have liberty, as well as others, to love, admire, adore, and trust in him, to open your hearts to him in secret ; yet you have no delight in him, no desire to think or speak of him. You come to public ordinances, but you find no pleasure therein, because you are a stranger to the inward and spiritual part thereof : you look at the minister's gifts and parts, and the manner of his doctrine and delivery, but are never taken up with the spiritual matter that is delivered. And yet, perhaps, you have pleasure enough in drinking, feasting, and idle talking : you seldom weary of them. But every spiritual exercise is a weariness to you ; and it is one of the hindrances of your conversion, lest religion should

deprive you of your mirth, and cause you to spend the rest of your days in heaviness. Alas! what blindness and wickedness are here!

Consider how ungrateful your heart is, when God hath provided and Christ hath purchased such privileges and delights, that sinners may be charmed with them, and yet you say you take them for no delights at all. If your child, or a beggar, should refuse the best things you can give them, and throw them away, saying, "There is no sweetness in it," would you not reckon it monstrous ingratitude? Then why so Christ and his blessings and pleasures, saying, "What a weariness is it!"? (Mal. i. 13). But if you still are weary of reading, praying, hearing, and other religious exercises, take heed lest you provoke God to cast you into a place where you will have more cause to be weary. Will you not weary of hell-fire, and the dolorous reviews of your own folly and of the awful sense of the never-ending wrath of God, and that for wearying of the sweetest services, and rejecting the greatest mercies he can offer, as if they were burdensome, worthless things? If God be not worthy to be loved and delighted in more than all *things else*, surely he is not God. If heaven

and holiness be not sweeter than all the pleasures of earth and sin, then they ought not to have such honourable names. Sin and earth may be called heaven; but woe to them that have no better!

Consider, if you find no pleasure in God and holiness, and in his way, you may be sure he hath no pleasure in you while you take more pleasure in sordid, fading trifles than in God and Christ. He can take no pleasure in your person nor in your prayers: "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord" (Prov. xv. 8). "For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity" (Psal. v. 4, 5. See also Isa. i. 13—15; Eccles. v. 4; Mal. i. 8—10; ii. 3; Zech. xi. 18; Heb. x. 38). How justly will they be all damned that obey not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness! If you continue to say practically you have no pleasure in him, how fearful will it be when you shall hear him saying he hath no pleasure in you! Hath Christ bought holiness and everlasting pleasures at the price of his blood? and do you think carnal, sensual pleasures better than they? O reader, is it Christ

or you, think you, that is mistaken in the value of them ?

If God and his ways of wisdom seem not pleasant to you, then heaven itself cannot seem pleasant to you ; for heavenly blessedness and felicity consist in the perfection of that holiness, vision, love, joy, and enjoyment of God which you so much hate and can take no pleasure in. If the little holiness that appears in the imperfect saints here on earth be so unpleasant to you, what pleasure could you take in that perfect holiness that has place above ? If the thoughts and mention of God, and the singing of his praises, be unpleasant, or matters of no delight to you, what would you do in heaven, where this, in perfection, must be your everlasting work ? Surely you have no right notion of heaven, if you hope to be there, and yet have no pleasure in heavenly things here ! What sort of a heaven do you expect ? Can you beg of God to bring you to glory, when you take glory to be a misery, grace a burden, and religion a weariness ? If you think there is a heaven of such sensual pleasures as you desire, or if you choose heaven *only* as a place of more tolerable misery *than hell*, you will shortly find your expecta-

tions to be deceived, and your hopes miserably frustrated.

That you may not only come and try, and also taste the pleasure that is to be found in Wisdom's ways, I wish to lay before you the following directions :—

I. Would you taste the pleasures of Wisdom's ways, and the peace thereof? then come and see, come and search into the pleasure of Wisdom's ways. Do not stand looking at a distance, where you see nothing but the outside; do not judge by hearsay, which gives no taste or relish: "O taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psa. xxxiv. 8). The sweetness of honey or meat is not properly known by looking at it, but by tasting it. Come near and try what it is to live in the faith and hope of eternal life, and to live in the love and favour of God through Jesus Christ. The shell is not sweet, but serves only to hide the kernel, which is the sweetest part. And, indeed, the kernel of religion is covered with a shell so hard that flesh and blood cannot break it. Hard sayings and hard providences to the Church and to particular believers are such hard shells as many can never break through, and therefore never taste the sweetness.

II. Cast away your prejudices and false con-

ceits, which have deceived you, and turned your mind against the ways of Wisdom. This would naturally follow upon the former ; for people will never be rid of their prejudices against Christ till they come and see. Nathanael saith, "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John i. 46). Philip answered to him, "Come and see ;" intimating that a sight of Christ would effectually remove prejudices. Can there be any pleasure in Wisdom's ways, in a religious life ? Yea, if you will come and see, you will soon throw away your prejudices. These two things are closely connected together, and reciprocally influence each other. Why, they that will not come and see will not relinquish their prejudice, and they who will not cast away their prejudice will not come and see. A man may be persuaded to hate his meat if you can but make him believe it is poison, or to hate his clothes if you can but persuade him that they are infected with contagious disease ; so, if you suffer your understanding to be deluded so far as to overlook the amiable nature of holiness, and of Wisdom's ways, and to think the image of God is but a fancy, that a heavenly life is but hypocrisy, and that it is but *pride for men* to be holier than others—if you

believe what the devil and his instruments say, no wonder that you hate the very name of holiness; nay, you shall never love God, nor see any loveliness in his service. How can you find pleasure in the greatest good while you take it for an evil?

III. Apply yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ, in the use of his appointed means, for the renewing of your nature, and that his Spirit may give you a new understanding to discern, and a new heart to relish, spiritual things; for your old corrupt minds and hearts will never do it; they are unsuitable to the things of God, and therefore cannot receive them, nor favour them (1 Cor. ii. 14, 15, and Rom. viii. 5—8). The appetite and relish of every living creature is suitable to its nature: a fish hath no pleasure in dry land, nor a flying bird in the bottom of the deep. So “that which is born of the flesh is flesh,” and therefore takes no pleasure but in fleshly things; and “that which is born of the Spirit is spirit,” and therefore will relish spiritual things. Seek, therefore, the new nature.

IV. If you would taste the pleasure of Wisdom’s ways, then forbear the pleasures of the ways of folly, even those sinful fleshly pleasures that you are so much taken up with; for they

infatuate your understanding, corrupt your appetite, and make the sweetest things seem loathsome to you. When the heart is glutted with sensual pleasures it makes the word and ways of God unsavoury. The prodigal that we read of (Luke xv.) never thought of the sweet and full provision of his father's house till he was brought to a famine of his former pleasure, and denied the very husks. Hence it is that God so frequently promotes the work of conversion by affliction. Perhaps you cannot tell how to leave your sensual pleasures, you who never found any nobler pleasure than that which lies in eating, drinking, sporting, and the like. What will you do when pain and sickness make you weary of your meat, drink, and sport, and to say, "I have no pleasure in them"? These things which you are now so loath to leave may shortly become such a load to your soul as undigested meat is to a disordered stomach—that you shall have no ease till you have vomited them up. Alas! you will never know your friends unless you forsake these deceivers, nor know the pleasures of a holy life unless you let go the poisonous pleasures of sin; then you will find that Wisdom's ways will not destroy your pleasures, but change *and recover* your pleasure and delight, and make

it noble, heavenly, spiritual, solid, and durable, and give you life for death, light for darkness, and gold for dross, and the greatest peace and safety instead of the greatest peril.

Dear reader, go to Jesus and ask him to forgive you, to bless you, to save you ; go to him now, go without delay. Do not say any more that your sins are so great that you fear he will not save you. He is able ; he is willing : doubt no more. God has graciously said for your encouragement, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee" (Exod. xxxiii. 19) ; "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely" (Hosea xiv. 4).

HERE in thy royal presence, Lord, I stand :

I give myself, my all, to thee.

Thou hast redeemed me by thy precious blood :

Thine only will I be.

No love but thine, but thine, can me relieve ;

No light but thine, but thine, will I receive ;

No light, no love, but thine !

Take, take me as I am ! Thou need'st me not,

I know thou need'st me not at all.

All heaven is thine, all earth, each mornir
star ;

High angels wait thy call.

I am the poorest of thy creatures, I,
The child of evil and dark misery ;

Yet take me as I am !

Perhaps thou overlookest me ; too small

A mote of being for thine eye

To rest on, or to care for ; far beneath

Thine awful majesty.

But still I am a thing of life I know,

And made for everlasting joy or woe :

Turn not thine eye away.

Perhaps thou dost repent of making me ?

And yet this, O my God, I know,

That I am made, made by thine own gr
hand,

Though least of all below.

Myself I cannot alter or unmake :

Oh, wilt thou not this soul of mine new-ma

New-make me, O my God !

Perhaps for aught of good I am unfit,

Most worthless and most useless all ;

Yet make me but the meanest thing that

Within thy Salem's wall.

I shall be well content, my God, to be,
Or do, or suffer aught that pleaseth thee :
Oh, cast me not away !

It would not cost thee dear to bless me, Lord ;
A word would do it, or a sign :
It needs no more from thee, no more, my God ;
Thy words have power Divine.
And, oh, the boundless blessedness to me—
Loved, saved, forgiven, renewed, and blessed by
thee !
Oh, speak, oh, speak the word !

Life ebbs apace, my night is coming fast ;
My cheek is wan, my hair is gray ;
I am not what I was when on me blazed
The noon of youth's bright day.
Make haste to do for me what thus I plead,
O thou, the succourer of my great need :
Oh, love and comfort me !

I know the blood of thine eternal Son
Has power to cleanse even me :
Oh, wash me now in that all-precious blood ;
Give my soul purity ;
Scatter the darkness, bid the day-star shine,
Light up the midnight of this soul of mine ;
Let all be song and joy !

JESUS CHRIST A PLEADING SAVIOUR.

“**H**E ever liveth to make intercession” (Heb. vii. 25). “Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb. ix. 24). What a delightful thought, that the well-beloved Son of God intercedes at the Father’s right hand for poor sinners—for you and me, dear reader! Your sins are many, your sins are great; they rise like a mountain before you, and, I doubt not, often threaten to sink you to the bottomless pit. You may now be overwhelmed by their magnitude. If so, I will try and disperse these fears by directing *you to the pleading Saviour, to his finished*

work, to his full and complete salvation and redemption.

Arise, O thou dejected soul! that art prostrate in the dust before God, and trembling under the terrors of his righteous sentence ; for I am commissioned to tell thee that, though thou hast destroyed thyself, in God is thine help. I bring thee good tidings of great joy, which delight mine own heart while I proclaim them, and will, I hope, reach and revive thine ; even the tidings of salvation, by the blood and righteousness of the Redeemer. And I give it thee, for thy greater security, in the words of a gracious and forgiving God, that he is "in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, and not imputing unto them their trespasses."

This is the best news that ever was heard, the most important message that God ever sent to his creatures ; and, though I doubt not but that, living, as you have done, in a Christian country, you have heard it often, perhaps a thousand and a thousand times, I will, with all simplicity and plainness, repeat it to you again, and repeat it as if you had never heard it before. If thou, O sinner! shouldst now for the first time feel it, then will it be as a new Gospel unto thee, though so familiar to thine ear ; nor shall

it be grievous for me to speak what is so common, since to you it is safe and necessary. They who are most intimately and deeply acquainted with it, instead of being cloyed and satiated, will hear it with distinguished pleasure ; and as for those who have hitherto slighted it, I am sure they had need to hear it again. Nor is it absolutely impossible that some one at least may read these lines who has never been clearly and fully instructed in this important doctrine, though his everlasting all depends on knowing and receiving it. I will, therefore, take care that such a one shall not have it to plead at the bar of God that, though he lived in a Christian country, he was never plainly and faithfully taught the doctrine of salvation by Jesus Christ, "the way, the truth, and the life, by whom alone we come unto the Father."

I do therefore testify unto you this day that the holy and gracious Majesty of heaven and earth, foreseeing the fatal apostasy into which the whole human race would fall, did not determine to deal in a way of strict and rigorous severity with us, so as to consign us over to universal ruin and inevitable damnation ; but, on *the contrary*, he determined to enter into a treaty *of peace and reconciliation*, and to publish to all

whom the Gospel should reach the express offer of life and glory in a certain method, which his infinite wisdom judged suitable to the purity of his nature and the honour of his government. This method was, indeed, a most astonishing one, which, familiar as it is to our thoughts and our tongues, I cannot recollect and mention without great amazement. He determined to send his own Son into the world, "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person," partaker of his own divine perfections and honours, to be not merely a teacher of righteousness and a messenger of grace, but also a sacrifice for the sins of men; and would consent to his saving them on no other condition but this, that he should not only labour, but die in the cause.

Accordingly, at such a period of time as infinite wisdom saw most convenient, the Lord Jesus Christ appeared in human flesh; and, after he had gone through incessant and long-continued fatigues, and borne all the preceding injuries which the ingratitude and malice of men could inflict, he voluntarily "submitted himself to death, even the death of the cross," and, having been "delivered for our offences, was raised again for our justification." After his resurrection

he continued long enough on earth to give his followers most convincing evidences of it, and then ascended into heaven in their sight, and sent down his Spirit from thence upon the apostles, to enable them, in the most persuasive and authoritative manner, to preach the Gospel ; and he has given it in charge to them, and to those who, in every age, succeed them in this part of their office, that it should be published to every creature, that all who believe in it may be saved by virtue of its abiding energy and the immutable power and grace of its divine author, who is “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”

This Gospel I therefore now teach, and proclaim unto thee, O reader ! with the sincerest desire that, through Divine grace, it may this very day be salvation to thy soul. Know, therefore, and consider it, whosoever thou art, that, as surely as these words are now before thine eyes, so sure it is that the incarnate Son of God was made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men—his back torn with scourges, his head with thorns, his limbs stretched out as on a rack, and nailed to the accursed tree ; and in *this* miserable condition he was hung by his *hands and his feet*, as an object of public infar

and contempt. Thus did he die, in the midst of all the taunts and insults of his cruel enemies, who thirsted for his blood ; and, what was the saddest circumstance of all, in the midst of these agonies with which he closed the most innocent, perfect, and useful life that was ever spent on earth, he had not those supports of the Divine presence which sinful men have often experienced when they have been suffering for the testimony of their conscience. They have often burst out into transports of joy and songs of praise while their executioners have been glutting their hellish malice, and more than savage barbarity, by making their torments artificially grievous ; but the crucified Jesus cried out, in the distress of his spotless and holy soul, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ?”

Look upon our dear Redeemer ; look up to this mournful, dreadful, yet, in one view, delightful spectacle, and then ask thine own heart, “Do I believe that Jesus suffered and died thus ? And why did he suffer and die ?” Let me answer in God’s own words : “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we

A Precious Saviour.

e healed : it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and to put him to grief." He made "his soul an offering for sin:" and the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all. So that I may address you in the words of the apostle, "Be it known unto you, therefore, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins;" as it was his command, just after he rose from the dead, "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem," the very place where his blood had so lately been shed in such a cruel manner. I do, therefore, testify to you, in the words of another inspired writer, that "Christ was made sin"—that is, a sin-offering—"for us, though he knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him;" that is, that through the righteousness he has fulfilled, and the atonement he has made, we might be accepted by God as righteous, and be not only pardoned, but received into his favour. "To you is the word of this salvation sent," and to you, O reader! are the blessings of it even now offered by God—sincerely offered; so that, after all that I have said under the *former* heads, it is not your having broken the *law of God* that shall prove your ruin, if you do

not also reject his Gospel. It is not all those legions of sins which rise up in battle-array against you that shall be able to destroy you, if unbelief do not lead them on and final impenitency do not bring up the rear. I know that guilt is a timorous thing; I will therefore speak in the words of God himself, nor can any be more comfortable: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he shall never come into condemnation." There is, therefore, now no condemnation, no kind or degree of it, to them, to any of them, "who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." You have, indeed, been a very great sinner, and your offences have truly been attended with most heinous aggravations; nevertheless, you may rejoice in the assurance that "where sin hath abounded, there shall grace much more abound:" that where "sin hath reigned unto death," where it has had its most unlimited sway and most unresisted triumphs, there "shall righteousness reign to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." That righteousness, to which on believing on him thou wilt be entitled, shall not only break those chains by which sin is, as it were, dragging thee at its chariot-wheels with a furious pace to

eternal ruin, but it shall clothe thee with the robes of salvation, shall fix thee on a throne of glory, where thou shalt live and reign for ever among the princes of heaven, shalt reign in immortal beauty and joy, without one remaining scar of Divine displeasure upon thee, without one single mark by which it could be known that thou hadst ever been obnoxious to wrath and a curse, except it be an anthem of praise to "the Lamb that was slain, and has washed thee from thy sins in his own blood."

Nor is it necessary, in order to thy being released from guilt, and entitled to this high and complete felicity, that thou shouldst, before thou wilt venture to apply to Jesus, bring any good works of thine own to recommend thee to his acceptance. It is, indeed, true that, if thy faith be sincere, it will certainly produce them ; but I have the authority of the Word of God to tell thee that, if thou this day sincerely believest in the name of the Son of God, thou shalt this day be taken under his care, and be numbered among those of his sheep to whom he hath graciously declared that he will give eternal life and that they shall never perish. Thou hast no need, therefore, to say, "Who shall go up into heaven, or who shall descend into the deep for

me? For the word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thine heart." With this joyful message I greet thee; with this faithful saying, indeed "worthy of all acceptance;" with this Gospel, O sinner! which is my life, and which, if thou dost not reject, will be thine too.

"Through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Eph. ii. 18). The blessed Saviour prayed for Peter, and he intercedes for us: he makes known to God all our requests. We should pray often; we should pray earnestly, and never despair. Some of the greatest sinners, some of the most unlikely characters (humanly speaking), have been saved in answer to their own prayers and the prayers of others.

In a revival that occurred some years ago in New England, several hardened men, past the meridian of life, became as little children, and were admitted to the church. The case of one excited peculiar attention. He had been moral, indeed, but ignorant of religion, while most of his family had become members of the church. He had withstood the Gospel so long that Christians seemed to regard his case as hopeless, and forgot him in their efforts and supplications. But his wife had long been faithful in

entreating him, and for years had made him the subject of many prayers. And now she felt moved once more to enter her closet in his behalf and submit his case, with an agonizing effort, fully and finally to God's disposal, and there lay down for ever the burden of her anxiety on his account. After long wrestling, she came at length from the place of her intercessions, and finding him at the door engaged with his axe, she begged him, in a *farewell* entreaty, for *her* sake, if not for his own, to go immediately and pray for the salvation of his soul. He seemed amazed, like Saul of Tarsus when the voice came from Heaven. He stood a moment trembling—the axe fell from his hand—and he replied, "*I will.*" He went to a retired place, remained till some time in the evening, and when he returned he was under deep convictions. He began from this time to attend all the meetings for prayer and worship. But his feelings were unknown to Christians, and at the close of the solemn meetings he would linger behind, standing apart, neglected, and gazing at the group of happy converts, a lame old man waiting beside the pool and none to help him into the healing waters. His wife watched his course, and said but little. At

length the light broke gradually in upon his soul. His life exhibited a marvellous change. He attended every meeting, old as he was, with the zeal of a young convert ; he confessed Christ before men, and resolved to erect a family altar. After knowing such a fact, what wife would cease praying for her husband's conversion ?

It redounds to the glory of God to save great sinners. With the essence of God we are utterly unacquainted ; it is his perfections, or attributes, displayed in creation, providence, and the sacred Scriptures, which are within the limits of our perception. Whatever opinion exalts one perfection of God by the depression of another, that opinion is incorrect and fatal in its consequences. Thus to make the mercy of God the only ground of hope, totally neglecting the justice of God, is erroneous, because, in the salvation of man, Jehovah is a just God and a Saviour.

Notwithstanding some of the moral perfections of God may appear to us more excellent than others, it is only in appearance. Justice is tremendous, for we are guilty, and exposed to its penalties ; and mercy is delightful, because it relieves our distresses ; nevertheless, in the

salvation of man by Jesus Christ even
tion of Jehovah is manifested. He
cease to be just when he dispenses m
cease to be merciful when he is just.

Mercy and justice, however apparentl
are united in the redemption of man
the God of heaven proclaim his name
the Lord descended in the cloud, a
with him there, and proclaimed the na
Lord. And the Lord passed by be
and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lc
merciful and gracious, longsuffering, a
dant in goodness and truth, keeping 1
thousands, forgiving iniquity and tran
and sin, and that will by no means
guilty" (Exod. xxxiv. 5, 6). You say
guilty, and therefore it is utterly impos
I can be saved." Be not rash in you
sions: God is merciful. You must g
God is disposed to be merciful, if it be c
with his justice. Come, then, to the
Jesus, and you will perceive him to
merciful and just—merciful in giving
be your Saviour, and just in inflicting th
ment of your sins in his body on
Behold your Lord bearing your sins a
ing your sorrows. Rely on his death

justification, and you are no longer condemned. "He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." On him justice was inflicted when he sustained the punishment of your sins; and God is just while he is "the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 25, 26); so that your justification is equally the act of justice as it is of mercy. The justice of God is therefore your encouragement; and all the declarations of mercy viewed through this medium may be understood in their most extensive signification.

Have you ever considered the compassionate language of the Holy Spirit expressed by the prophet Hosea? "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city" (Hos. xi. 8, 9). Admah and Zeboim were involved in the flames of Sodom and Gomorrah, presenting an emblem of eternal fire. Behold, God is

reluctant to punish, therefore doubt neither his sincerity nor his power to save. It is God, and not man, who speaks. Is it not evident, if God executes the fierceness of his anger, it is because men believe not his truth nor embrace his mercy ? Cease, then, from complaining, and burst into the rapturous song of the prophet Micah : “ Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage ? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us ; he will subdue our iniquities ; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea ” (Micah vii. 18, 19).

God rejoices in the communication of mercy ; can he, then, be unwilling to hear the prayer of the penitent ? The pains, also, which God takes to reconcile sinners unto himself proves his willingness to save ; and when Jehovah expostulates it is not our province to wrangle. Honour God by giving the preference to his judgment. Rely on his assertions, embrace his salvation ; for the Holy God will not sully the glory of his great name. “ He is the Rock, his work is perfect : for all his ways are judgment : *a God of truth and without iniquity, just and*

right is he" (Deut. xxxii. 4). "For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off" (Isa. xlviii. 9).

It is worthy of your investigation to consider that it is the design of God to exalt the Lord Jesus in the salvation of sinners; for this purpose it is decreed, "there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12). God is so much delighted with his obedience unto death as to place him on his throne and to command all men to submit to his sceptre, saying to his ministers, "Preach the gospel to every creature." Condemnation is the result of disobedience: "he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark xvi. 16). If the magnitude of sin be your only reason for disobedience, that very reason is dishonourable to the Son of God. It amounts to this declaration: "There is not sufficient virtue in the sacrifice of Christ to pardon my sins." Thy sins! Look on the patriarchal and Levitical dispensations. See the beautiful shadow of good things to come, foreshadowing the wonderful virtue of the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world; "For if the blood of bulls, and of goats, and the ashes

of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh : how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God ?" (Heb. ix. 13, 14). Count the worthies of whom Paul writes in his eleventh chapter to the Hebrews ; behold the innumerable company of the general assembly of the church of the first-born ; number the sands which lie on the shores of the sea ; ascend to the stars and tell exactly their multitude ; and, when this is done, say how many and how great the sins are which Jesus can forgive, or which the virtue of his blood can expiate. As it is the design of God to glorify himself in the mediation of his Son, and to make the splendour of his sacrifice illustrious, unite with God when he says, "To him every knee shall bow ;" make one of the retinue of this exalted Prince, consent to be a subject of his kingdom by relying on the efficacy of his atonement and the grace of his Spirit. This done, you may then say, with holy joy, "I was once so wicked as to say, My sin is too great to be pardoned, although I had read in the volume of inspiration 'the blood of *Jesus Christ* his Son cleanseth us from all sin'

(1 John i. 7) ; but who can now call in question either the power or willingness of Christ to save?"

The glory of the wisdom, power, and compassion of the Holy Ghost will be exalted in your believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. The ever-blessed God is very jealous for the glory of the Holy Spirit. Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead when they sinned against him ; and, on the contrary, when a sinner submits to Jesus to be taught, sanctified, and comforted, through his salvation angels and Christians perceive the wisdom, power, and compassion of the Holy Ghost. It was *he* who enlightened his understanding, convinced his judgment, and conquered his rebellion, by making him a willing subject of the Redeemer's empire : "for God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 6). By truth *he* removed error, by irresistible arguments overcame prejudice, and by motives, chiefly drawn from the cross of Jesus, "worked effectually in those who believe." It being his office to "convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment" (John xvi. 8), thus every believer in Jesus makes known the power, wis-

dom, and compassion of the Holy Spirit ; and this is your encouragement. Lo ! this Spirit directs you to the Saviour ; therefore exalt his wisdom by submitting to his instructions.

The compassion of the Holy Spirit is greatly exalted in your believing in Jesus. The Spirit who searcheth all things, knowing the moral state of man, moved with compassion, gives to believers in Jesus power to become the sons of God ; born with enlightened understandings, fitted for the contemplation of the ever-blessed God, possessing holy dispositions which gradually destroy every base temper, they arrive perfect before the throne of God. Come to Jesus, that admiring angels may point to your person, saying, " Behold the compassion of the sacred Spirit in giving eternal life to that great transgressor."

Come to Jesus, you will honour the perfections of Jehovah, exalt the atonement of his Son, and glorify the ministration of his blessed Spirit.

The blessed Redeemer heard and answered the prayer of the dying thief immediately it was presented. Jesus said unto him, " Verily, I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in *paradise* " (Luke xxiii. 43).

Dear reader, if you are the chief of sinners, do not let that keep you from coming to the pleading Saviour. Who can tell but you will have power with God in prayer and prevail. You may be an old sinner, a very hardened sinner, and still there is mercy for you. Do not allow Satan to deceive you by telling you "your day of grace is past ;" if you listen to him he will win your soul. He has told some poor trembling sinners this before, and they have proved him to be a liar, for they have obtained peace and eternal salvation through the pleading Saviour.

Seeing, then, that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our possession (Heb. iv. 14). It is our duty as believers to receive the truth and all sound doctrine cordially. Receive the truth affectionately, and let it dwell in your souls plenteously. There are no men on earth so fenced against error as those are that receive the truth in the love of it. Such souls are not easily tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the flight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. It is not he that receives most of the truth into his head,

but he that receives most of the truth affectionately into his heart, that shall enjoy the happiness of having his judgment sound and clear when others shall be deluded and deceived by them who make it their business to infect the judgments and to undo the souls of men. Oh! let not the word be a stranger, but make it your choicest familiar; then will you be able to stand in the day wherein many shall fall on your right hand and on your left, by the subtlety of those that shall say, "Lo, here is Christ, and lo, there is Christ."

Solemnly consider that error makes the owner to suffer loss. All the pains and labour that men take to defend and maintain their errors, to spread abroad and infect the world with their errors, shall bring no profit nor no comfort to them in that day wherein every man's work shall be made manifest, and the fire shall try it, of what sort it is, as the apostle shows in that remarkable Scripture, 1 Cor. iii. 12—15. Ah, reader! is it nothing to lay out your money for that which is not bread, and your strength for that which will not, which cannot profit you in the day that you must *make up* your accounts, and all your works *must be tried by fire*? "Buy the truth, and

sell it not." Remember, you can never over-buy it, whatsoever you give for it; you can never sufficiently sell it, if you should have all the world in exchange for it.

We should hate, reject, and abominate all those doctrines and opinions that are contrary to godliness, and that open a door to profaneness, and all such opinions that do lift up our own righteousness in the room of Christ's righteousness, that place good works in the throne of Christ, and make them co-partners with Christ.

Hold fast the truth. As men take no hold on the arm of flesh till they let go the arm of God (Jer. xvii. 5), so men take no hold on error till they have let go their hold of truth; therefore, hold fast the truth. Truth is thy crown, hold fast thy crown, and let no man take thy crown from thee (2 Tim. i. 13, and Tit. i. 9). Have you not found truth a guide to lead you, a staff to uphold you, a cordial to strengthen you? And will not you hold fast the truth? Hath not truth been your best friend in your worst days? Hath not truth stood by you when friends have forsaken you? Hath not truth done more for you than all the world could do against you? Oh! hold fast the truth in your judgments

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and understandings, in your wills and affect in your profession and conversation.

Let your souls cleave to truth as Ruth did to Naomi (Ruth i. 15—17), and say, "I will leave truth nor return from following after it, but where truth goes I will go, and where it lodgeth I will lodge, and nothing but it shall part truth and my soul." What John said to the Church of Philadelphia I may say to you: "Hold that fast which thou hast, lest man take thy crown." The crown is the crown of royalties: such a thing is truth. Let man take thy crown. Hold fast the faithful word, as Titus speaks, Tit. i. 9. Blessed be those souls that are kept by truth.

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." How earnestly does the blessed Saviour pray for the safety and happiness of the redeemed! If Jesus thus pleads for sinners, how much more ought they to plead for themselves! How few there are who think right and enough about these things, and therefore at their dying moments they utter the most bitter regrets respecting their misspent life!

Philip III. of Spain, whose life was free

gross evils, professed that he would rather lose his kingdom than offend God willingly ; but when he came to the hour of death, considering most seriously the account he would have to render to God, he was led to indulge very anxious fears, and he exclaimed, "Oh ! would to God I had never reigned ; oh ! that those years I have spent in my kingdom, I had lived a solitary life in the wilderness ; oh ! that I had lived a life alone with God !"

"Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace," come often, come without fear, knowing that the pleading Saviour is seated at the right hand of God, and there makes intercession for us. Shake off all your fears, dear reader, and trust more implicitly the Divine Redeemer who has said, "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John vi. 39, 40). Jesus is the pleading Saviour. He is the Christ of God.

To know the Christ of God,
The everlasting Son ;
To know what he on earth
For guilty man has done :
This is the first and last
Of all that's true and wise ;
The circle that contains all light
Beneath, above the skies.
Father, unseal my eyes,
Unveil my veiled heart,
Reveal this Christ to me !

The Christ, the Incarnate Son,
The Christ, the eternal Word ;
The Christ, heaven's glorious King,
The Christ, earth's coming Lord ;
The Christ, the sum of all
Jehovah's power and grace,
God's treasure-house of truth and love,
The brightness of his face.
Father, unseal my eyes,
Unveil my veiled heart,
Reveal this Christ to me !

The Christ who took man's flesh,
Who lived man's life below,
Who died man's death for man—
The death of shame and woe.

The Christ who from the Cross
 Descended to man's grave,
Then rose in victory and joy,
 Mighty to bless and save !
 Father, unseal my eyes,
 Unveil my veiled heart,
 Reveal this Christ to me !

JESUS CHRIST A PRESENT SAVIOUR.

“**B**EHOLD, now is the accepted time; behold now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. v). To-day the sinner is encouraged to seek salvation of his soul; to-day he is warned to flee from the wrath to come; to-day the Saviour is presented to him as willing and able to save. The present is the sinner’s only sure time of opportunity; therefore it is extreme folly, the height of madness, if he delays to cry for mercy while he has the time for so doing. Never should the sinner’s unworthiness hinder him from coming to the Divine Redeemer. If he devotes his whole life to the preparation of *worthiness*, he will assuredly fail in accomplishing such an end: he will find it far better

come to God just as he is, confessing his sinfulness, and craving pardon and acceptance in consequence of the merits of another, even Jesus Christ ; and he will find that "they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 17).

Some make objections to being saved, and say, "I will apply to Christ for salvation when I am holier." It is our province to inquire whether you should stop till you are holier, or instantly seek pardon, peace, and sanctification through our Lord Jesus. You should observe that regeneration, or a holy heart, removes the power, but not the guilt of sin. Tyrus robbed his master, rebelled against his God, and strengthened the powers of indwelling sin by actual transgressions. He was converted, and became obedient to the will of God ; yet he stood charged with the guilt of "past sins," which can only be removed by believing in Jesus, who of God is made unto us "righteousness." This he heard and believed ; "and being justified by faith, he had peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, knowing that there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.

Even should it be admitted that you do not seek salvation as the reward of your holiness yet an objection of this kind looks like it : some would blush to avow such a declaration while yet expect salvation because they are less guilty than others. You say, "This is not a correct description of my situation. I tremble to enter the presence of a God of unsullied purity and immutable justice ; therefore, to be more fit to believe in Christ, I will pray, fast, watch, resolve to be charitable, and stir up my mind to sublimed devotion." To do so is well, but to do these things instead of relying on Christ for salvation to substitute them in the place of Christ, or to make them the means of keeping you from faith in Christ, is a conduct tending to the ruin of your immortal souls. You should not seek fitness in order to believe, but forego every other consideration by an immediate application to the Lord Jesus : for if there be any fitness, it is a consciousness that you deserve his eternal displeasure ; and even in this there is no merit—it is no more than you ought to feel.

You should not delay ; for this resolution *defeats* its own design by keeping you for ever *from Christ*. If you wait till improvements give

sufficient encouragement, alas ! every day will be clouded with some sin, and every sin will be a discouragement ; nay, if the Spirit of God prevent not, your discouragements will end in despair or dissoluteness. Cease from these exertions as a fitness to believe in Jesus. You must trust in Christ as you now are. “He justifieth the ungodly” (Rom. iv. 5).

How could you answer the Son of God if, pointing to you, he should say, “See that sinner, how opposite he acts to my advice ! Why does he labour without strength ? for, separated from me, he can do nothing. But let him labour ; and thou eternal Spirit increase the force of his convictions until he faints under his own accusations. He may then take my counsel.” While you remain at a distance from Christ you cannot be holy : you want life for exertion. “He that hath the Son of God hath life.”

Be persuaded to come just as you are ; for it is the very situation in which Christ receiveth sinners. Could you prove your state to be such that mercy could not possibly be shown to you, it might justify delay that you might be prepared ; but this cannot be done. I would advise you frequently to read the following quotation :—
“And you hath he quickened, who were dead

in trespasses and sins ; wherein in time past we walked according to the course of this world according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience : among whom also we all our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind ; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are we saved ;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places with Christ Jesus : that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith ; that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. [For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision, *that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands ; that at that time ye*

without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world : but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. ii. 1—13). Can you calculate the exceeding riches of his grace ? In the judgment of God, your unfitness is no unfitness ; the worse your moral state, the more urgent reasons have you for immediate application and the more dangerous are delays.

But let us refer to a few instances in which the individuals had not time, or where they allow no consideration to keep them from faith in Jesus. When Paul was struck to the ground on his journey to Damascus, he had recourse neither to ceremonial nor moral duties before applying to the Lord Jesus. He immediately asked two questions : " Who art thou, Lord ?" " Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ?" Make the will of Christ the rule of your present conduct ; this will obviate your difficulty. " This is the command of God, that we believe on his Son." Not that hereafter we should believe, but *now*. Your delaying is increasing your guilt, by disobeying a command binding on you at the present moment. " You must

also remember that it is your privilege to go to Christ by such a faith *now* and every succeeding moment, and that you are to bring nothing but a distracted, lost, hard heart—just such a one as you have now. Here lies the grand mistake of many poor but precious souls: they are afraid to believe, lest it should be presumption, because they have not as yet comfort, joy, love, &c., and considering that this is to look for fruit before the tree is planted.”

Should you object that God must have respect to righteousness in the justification of a sinner? Most assuredly he has. But this must be to perfect righteousness, such as will honour the Divine government, while it acquits the guilty. This righteousness is wrought out and brought in through the sufferings and obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ; he is “the Lord of righteousness.” The punishment of our crime being transferred to his person, and the “Law having laid on him the iniquity of us all,” punishment is not inflicted on us, and thus by “stripes we are healed;” his righteousness accepted in the stead of our righteousness, and we are treated as if we had never sinned. The consequence of the perfection of his obedience *unto death*, honouring the Divine government

the redemption of man, the Holy Spirit unites us to Christ, and thereby conveys to us the vital influence of the Saviour's mediation. This influence of the Spirit is the reward of Christ's humiliation ; " He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."

The righteousness to which God has respect in the justification of a sinner is the perfect obedience of our Lord ; and whoever are united to the Saviour by a living faith, derive both righteousness to justify their persons and holiness to purify their natures.

Let me remove the objection that you must apply to Christ for salvation when you are holier, by showing that the name and perfections of God are highly exalted when sinners apply to the Lord Jesus. What does God propose to himself in dispensing mercy ? A resolution of this question is worthy the utmost attention. I answer, not any manifestation of righteousness in the creature before his believing in Christ, for this would be to render visible what never existed ; but it is to give a rich display of the glory of his name and perfections in dispensing pardon to the guilty, and communicating purity to the unholy.

Whatever makes known the glory of his name

and perfections is the line of conduct which (pursues ; and in no one instance are the na and perfections of God so much exalted as w a convinced and penitent sinner prays for m and holiness through the mediation of Cl Jesus.

If the law and government of God be hono and your souls saved, what need have yo devise another plan unsanctioned by the I Scriptures ? The sufferings of Jesus are an a display of the justice of God ; for, when (spared not his Son, the cross trembled un the pressure of a Saviour's tortures, the e felt it, hell from beneath was moved, and inhabitants of the infernal world looked for more horrible sufferings.

In the cross God's love of holiness is appa in the spotless sacrifice of Jesus, and his m to fallen man in making his own Son, his loved Son, in whom he was well please sacrifice for sin. A self-righteous sinner w rob God of the glory of his justice, holiness, mercy. Beware lest your objection should : from pride ; should this be your case, your is great and fearful : be humbled, repent, *depart* from it. He that catches a spark of *Divine* glory from the altar of God need

wonder if it kindle into a flame and pursue him to the lowest hell.

In support of the statement that the name and perfections of God are highly exalted when sinners apply to the Lord Jesus for salvation, consult the following passages:—"For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off." "For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another" (Isa. xlviii. 9, 11). Five times in the compass of these verses is the honour of God considered as the end which he proposes to himself in the salvation of those who are called transgressors. To suppose that in the smallest degree your preparation will contribute to your justification in the sight of God, is to attempt to share the honour of your redemption with God. Ask the question, By whom is God most honoured—by the man who solely attributes his salvation to the mercy of God, or by him who compounds with God, partly attributing it to Christ, and partly to himself? You answer, "I wish not to diminish the glory of the grace of God in my salvation;" but, if you wish it not, by waiting till you are holier *you do it*.

He that believeth in Jesus relies on him alone for salvation ; but you defer that reliance in expectation of a supposed future holiness, and thus remain in unbelief. So long as you continue doing this you make void the righteousness which is of God by faith. It would be far better to adopt the words of the sweet singer of Israel : "O remember not against us former iniquities : let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us : for we are brought very low. Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name : and deliver us, and purge away our sins for thy name's sake" (Psa. lxxix. 8, 9).

Examine also the 36th chapter of Ezekiel, 25th, 26th, and 27th verses: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean : from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you : and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." You may see whether these blessings were conferred on account of previous holiness by reading the 21st, 22nd, and 23rd verses: "*But I had pity for mine holy name, which the*

house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes."

Is a man, then, to remain impenitent, prayerless, and use no exertions to save his soul? By no means: without penitence, prayer, and exertion, no one can be saved. Verse 31: "Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations." Yet, lest it should be supposed that penitential loathing was the cause why mercy was communicated, it is added, "Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel." Nevertheless, it is sinful to cease from prayer; for "thus saith the Lord God; I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them."

You are not to be blamed for attempting to be holier, for exciting repentance, and habituating yourselves to prayer, *but for keeping from Christ*. It is as if a man should stand without the gate of a palace, and, after earnest prayers

and tears, should yet refuse to enter the dwelling where the prince waited to bestow the favour which he desired, but remain without and perish. Neglect not a duty on which the salvation of your soul depends. He that believeth shall be saved, not he who delays application to Jesus for salvation because he is not sufficiently holy.

Proper conceptions of the mercy of God will also be highly useful to you. The Lord delights to exalt his mercy in the salvation of man, and you should not be afraid to trust in him, when it is said, "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy" (Psa. cxlvii. 11). If you do not hope in his mercy, you will displease him; and that which excites the Divine displeasure can be but a miserable preparation to please him.

In the 9th chapter of the book of Nehemiah, when the prophet had recapitulated the sins of Israel and the mercies of their God, he says, in the 17th verse, "But thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness." This is introduced amidst strong expressions of Israel's sinfulness: "They and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks, and hearkened not **to thy** commandments; refused to obey, were

unmindful of thy wonders, cast thy law behind their backs, and slew thy prophets which testified against them." Yet it is recorded, "In the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven;" so that you may learn from hence that it is both your duty and happiness no longer to delay; and if you are tempted to tarry because of your supposed unfitness, reply, "It is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour." You are a fit subject for mercy: you are a sinner; and that is what God wishes you to feel. Embrace that mercy, and the God of grace will sanctify you wholly.

There remains one more consideration: God is true, and delights in exalting his faithfulness. All created things are mutable, but in God there is neither variableness nor shadow of turning. "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Are you not a sinner? Why, then, should you not receive this saying? It is faithful, and therefore worthy of your confidence. "You will receive it;" but when? It

is now a faithful saying; it is now worthy of acceptation; it is now that Christ receiveth sinners. It is worthy of the acceptation of all, and you are not excluded: "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts;" to-morrow you may be in your grave. You may flatter yourselves you are doing right (and flattery it is); for "this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (John vi. 29). Let us seek to obey the Divine commands, and then we shall be happy. Jesus Christ is a present Saviour; he waits to be gracious to sinners. He will save the most unworthy, the vilest sinner living, if he will but come humbly and confess his sins, and ask pardon for the same. Doubting, trembling sinner, come to him at once, come without delay. If you do not like to acknowledge your transgressions before your fellow-creatures, do not shrink from confessing them before Jesus, the Divine and present Saviour. Some of the best men, when they have been in fault, have confessed the same to the offended person, and asked them to overlook their failing. The following is one striking instance:—

Joseph Bradford was for some years the *travelling* companion of Mr. Wesley, for whom

he would have sacrificed health and even life, but to whom his will would never bend, except in meekness. "Joseph," said Mr. Wesley, one day, "take these letters to the post." B. "I will take them after preaching, sir." W. "Take them now, Joseph." B. "I wish to hear you preach, sir ; and there will be sufficient time for the post after service." W. "I insist upon your going now, Joseph." B. "I will not go at present." W. "You won't ?" B. "No, sir." W. "Then you and I must part." B. "Very good, sir." The good men slept over it. Both were early risers. At four o'clock the next morning the refractory helper was accosted with, "Joseph, have you considered what I said—that we must part?" B. "Y^es, sir." W. "And must we part?" B. "Please yourself, sir." W. "Will you ask my pardon, Joseph?" B. "No, sir." W. "You won't ?" B. "No, sir." W. "Then I will ask *yours*, Joseph." Poor Joseph was instantly melted, smitten as by the rod of Moses, and forth gushed the tears, like the water from the rock. He had a tender soul, and it was soon observed when the appeal was made to the heart instead of the head.

The best men have always been the most humble. Let thy endowments, dear reader, be

of the immortal kind. Study to be all-glorious within ; be clothed with humility ; wear ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. beautifully does the prophet describe the picture of a renewed and heavenly mind under similitude of a rich and complete suit of apparel. "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God ; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and a bride adorneth herself with her jewels" (Isa. 61. 10). "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ" (I. Cor. xiii. 14). Let his blood be sprinkled upon your conscience, and it shall be whiter than virgin snows ; let his righteousness, like a precious robe, adorn thy inner man, and thou shalt be amiable, even in the most distinguished eye of God ; let his blessed Spirit dwell in thy heart, and, under his sanctifying operation, thou shalt be made to partake of a Divine nature. These are real excellences, noble accomplishments these ! These exalt thee far above the low pretensions of gold and embroidery : these will prepare thee to stand in the beatific presence, and to take seat among the angels of light. What to

porting pleasure must arise from the fruition of uncreated excellency ! Oh, what unknown delight to enter into thy immediate presence, most blessed Lord God ! to see thee, thou King of heaven and Lord of glory, no longer "through a glass, darkly," but face to face ! to have all thy goodness, all thy greatness, shine before us, and be made glad for ever with the brightest discovery of thy perfections, with the ineffable joy of thy countenance ! This we cannot bear in our present imperfect state. The effulgence of unveiled Divinity would dazzle a mortal's sight. Our feeble faculties would be overwhelmed with such a fulness of superabundant bliss, and must lie oppressed under such an exceeding weight of glory. But when the corruptible hath put on incorruption, the powers of the soul will be greatly invigorated, and these earthly tabernacles will be transformed into the likeness of Christ's glorious body ; then, though "the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed" (Isa. xxiv. 23), when the Lord of hosts is revealed from heaven, yet shall his faithful people be able to "see him as he is" (1 John iii. 2). Here, then, my wishes, here be fixed ; be this your determined and invariable aim. Here, my affections, here give a loose to

your whole ardour. Cry out, in the language of inspiration, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord" (Psa. xxi. 1) and to contemplate with wonder and admiration, with unspeakable and everlasting rapture, all the attributes of the incomprehensible head.

Solomon, a penetrating judge of human nature, knowing how highly mankind is charmed with the fine qualities of flowers, has figured the blessed Jesus, that fairest among ten thousand, by the following lovely representation: *the rose of Sharon*, and *the lily of the valley*. (Song ii. 1)—like the first, full of delights and communicable graces; like the last, exalted in majesty and complete in beauty. In that sacred parable he ranges the creation, borrows its most fine forms, and dips his pencil in its choicest colours to present us with a sketch of the amiableness of his person; his amiableness who is the light of the world, the glory of his Church, the only hope, the sovereign consolation of sinners, and exalted, infinitely exalted, not only above all, but the sublimest comparison, but even above all blessing and praise. May you, dear reader,

thus : "May I also make the same heavenly use of all sublunary enjoyments. Whatever is pleasurable or charming below, let it raise my desire to those delectable objects which are above, which will yield not partial, but perfect felicity—not transient, but never-ending satisfaction and joy. Yes, my soul, let these beauties in miniature always remind thee of that glorious Person in whom 'dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.' Let these little emanations teach thee to thirst after the eternal Fountain. Oh, may the creatures be thy constant clue to the Creator ; for this is a certain truth, and deserves thy frequent recollection, demands thy most attentive consideration, that the whole compass of finite perfection is only a faint ray shot from that immense source, is only a small drop derived from that inexhaustible ocean of all good.

'Thou sitt'st above all heav'ns,
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works ; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and pow'r Divine.'"

Isaiah represents the felicity of the righteous in the everlasting world by this elegant and amiable image : Thine eyes shall see the King in his

beauty." Milton expresses the same with wonderful elevation and majesty of thought :—

“ They walked with God
High in salvation and the climes of bliss.”

We may behold Jesus Christ now as a present Saviour, though we cannot fully gaze upon his glorious perfections. Let us ask him to become our present, our all-sufficient, our everlasting Saviour, and then we shall show forth his praise; we shall be blessings to the Church and the world; we shall be “wise as serpents, and harmless as doves”—wise as serpents to guard against the wolf’s rapacity, and harmless as doves that we may do no man any injury. Thus the serpent’s eye is an ornament when placed in the dove’s head. The lives of many professors are fearfully unlike their lights : they have the light of the sun for wisdom, but want the heat of a candle for grace and holiness. I have read of a painter who, being warmly reprehended by a cardinal for putting too much red in the faces of St. Paul and St. Peter, answered, “It is to show how much they blush at the conduct of many who style themselves their successors.” Were Abraham, the father of the faithful, now on earth, how would he disclaim *all* relation to many who call themselves his off-

spring ! Though there was less grace discovered to the saints of old, yet there was more grace discovered by them. They *knew little*, and *did much* : we *know much*, and *do little*. It is our duty to be more consistent, to live to Christ and for him ; and then we shall shine as lights in the world, and others will be benefited by our consistency. Dear reader, let me ask if you have found Jesus Christ to be a present Saviour : if not, I beseech you to seek him as such without delay. "He will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy ; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing" (Zeph. iii. 17). "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). Make the following sentiments your own :—

Oh, strong to save and bless,
My Rock and righteousness,
Draw near to me !
Blessing, and joy, and might,
Wisdom, and love, and light
Are all with thee !

My refuge and my rest !
As child on mother's breast,
I lean on thee.

From faintness and from fear,
When foes and ill are near,
Deliver me !

Turn not away thy face ;
Withhold not needed grace :
My fortress be !
Perils are round and round,
Iniquities abound,
See, Saviour, see !

Come, God and Saviour, come !
I can no more be dumb :
Appeal I must
To thee, the Gracious One ;
Else is my hope all gone,
I sink in dust !

Oh, answer me, my God :
Thy love is deep and broad ;
Thy grace is true !
Thousands this grace have shared :
Oh, let *me* now be heard ;
Oh, love *me* too !

Descend, thou mighty love,
Descend from heaven above ;
Fill thou this soul !

Heal every bruised part,
Bind up this broken heart,
And make me whole !

'Tis knowing thee that heals ;
'Tis seeing thee that seals
Comfort and peace.
Show me thy cross and blood,
My Saviour and my God ;
Then troubles cease.

JESUS CHRIST AN ALL-SUFFICIENT SAVIOUR.

JESUS all-sufficient for all things—what a precious thought for the sinner! what a comforting promise for you, dear reader, and for me! “As thy days, so shall thy strength be” —abundant grace in the time of need; grace to save us, grace to preserve us, grace to sustain us, grace at all times and under all circumstances. When the exigency comes, then we may safely trust an almighty arm to bear us through: we have an all-sufficient Saviour. He has said, for our encouragement, “*My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.*” Let us take refuge, therefore, at the cross of a crucified Saviour, and say here, “Lord, give me that grace thou hast pro-

mised to the penitent, lowly sinner. I seek to be washed in thy blood, sanctified by thy Spirit, guided by thy counsel, and supplied by thy all-sufficient grace. I have no other Saviour but thee ; I need no other : thou art all and in all to me. I am unable to stand in myself ; but I look to thee for support, thou blessed Redeemer. If tempted to sin, I shall be likely to fall, unless thy strength is made perfect in my weakness ; therefore be thou ever present with me, be thou my all-sufficient Saviour. My Divine Redeemer, enable me to exercise unwavering faith in thee, so that I can say, ‘ Though thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee.’ When doubting and trembling, let me hear thee say, ‘ The Lord is with you, while ye be with him ; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you ’ (2 Chron. xv. 2). When enemies threaten to overcome me, let me hear thee say, ‘ Fear thee not ; for I am with thee ’ ” (Isa. xli. 10).

The martyrs proved Jesus Christ to be an all-sufficient Saviour. When Polycarp, an ancient bishop of the Church at Smyrna, was brought to the tribunal, the proconsul asked him if he was Polycarp, to which he assented. The proconsul then began to exhort him, saying, “ Have pity on thine own great age ; swear by

the fortune of Cæsar ; repent ; say, take away these atheists ;" meaning the Christians. Polycarp, casting his eyes solemnly over the multitude, waving his hand to them, and looking up to heaven, said, " Take away these atheists ;" meaning the idolaters around him. The proconsul still urging him, and saying, " Swear, and I will release thee ; reproach Christ," Polycarp said, " Eighty and six years have I served him, and he hath never wronged me ; and how can I blaspheme my King who hath saved me ?" " I have wild beasts," said the proconsul, " and will expose you to them unless you repent." " Call them," said the martyr. " I will tame your spirit by fire," said the Roman. " You threaten me," said Polycarp, " with the fire which burns only for a moment, but are yourself ignorant of the fire of eternal punishment, reserved for the ungodly." Soon after, being about to be put to death, he exclaimed, " O Father of thy beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ ! O God of all principalities and of all creation ! I bless thee that thou hast counted me worthy of this day, and this hour, to receive my portion in the number of the martyrs, in the cup of Christ."

How fully have God's people realized the

truth of that gracious declaration, "And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else : and my people shall never be ashamed" (Joel ii. 27).

Various objections are urged by sinners against being saved. Some say, "I would willingly believe in Christ, but I know that I shall apostatize ; and therefore it is useless." It is true that many professed faith in the Redeemer during his incarnation who walked with him for a short time, and then were seen with him no more ; yet their final apostasy cannot be ascertained from this circumstance.

To apostatize from a profession of Christianity, and thus to "fall from grace," is perfectly distinct from the annihilation of those principles and dispositions which God has created in the individual whom he has renewed : the first is a mere discovery of hypocrisy or weakness ; the second would be an annihilation of what God had created, and would show sin and Satan triumphing over God, overthrowing his decrees, annulling his government, putting aside his promises, counteracting the energies of his Spirit, and ejecting the Holy Ghost from his temple, which he had made his

dwelling till the soul be separated from the body.

Should you say, "I have been with the Lord Jesus, but am now at an awful distance from him," I should then conceive either that you have not believed in him to the salvation of your soul, or that your apostasy is but temporary.

Perhaps you have been tempted to believe that sin is an infirmity rather than a crime. Some have reasoned thus : "I am a depraved creature, the temptations of sin are so powerful, the wisdom and strength of Satanic influence are more than I can resist ; so that I judge but little, if any, blame can be attached to my conduct." Thus deluded sinners reason, or rather speak unadvisedly and ignorantly ; whilst God declares sin to be exceedingly sinful, revealing his wrath from heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men. Sin once admitted to be an infirmity only, or an evil not to be avoided, then the whole system of the redemption of man must appear foolishness. The love of the Father in the gift of his Son, so highly celebrated, sinks, in our estimation, into insignificance. The death of Jesus appears superfluous, and the influence of the Holy Ghost a mere nullity. Wonder not, then, if the

spirit of prayer should expire. Prayer is encouraged by a conviction of sin, a conviction of the need of mercy : he who harbours such a thought is too proud to be a subject of mercy. The love of the Father, the grace of the Son, and the influence of the Holy Ghost appear important only to those who consider themselves the "children of wrath." While such an opinion is entertained men may well be unhappy. They must repent of this thought of their heart, that it may be forgiven.

An awful distance from Christ will necessarily ensue from the want of a deep conviction of indwelling sin. Your faith has so far sanctified you that you abstain from all gross immoralities : it is well ; but you are tempted to think more highly of yourselves than you ought to think ; speaking, perhaps, contemptuously of others, confident in judgment, presumptuous in prayer, self-willed, and proud.

Does this become one who wishes to be a disciple of the lowly Jesus, one who ought to say at all times, "In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing"? This want of a deep conviction of indwelling sin must be avoided. Our Lord bindeth up the broken-hearted, but he beholdeth the proud afar off.—It is no

subject of wonder that you should have fears.

An awful distance from Christ will also necessarily ensue from false notions of duty. That moment we become Christians, instead of being freed from obedience to the moral law, we enter on duties which had been neglected before ; and the law, which was written on tables of stone on Mount Sinai by the finger of God, is written on the fleshly tables of our hearts. The ten precepts of the law are not to be seen in our Bibles, and even over our communion-tables only, but in the conduct of every holy man. Christ saves us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. Christ was made under the law, to set us an example that we should follow his footsteps. It is true he magnified the law, but it was not that we should debase it ; he made it honourable, but not that we should dishonour it. It becomes us, as it became him, to be "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."

That Jesus died to enforce the practice of holiness, as well as to make atonement for sin, appears from the design of that very atonement. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, *who* through the eternal Spirit offered him.

self without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. ix. 14). Who can endure the justice which spared not the Son of God? Who will resist the love of Jesus, who, in pity to our souls, died on the cross? What can exceed the perfection of his holiness? and who need despair of salvation from sin who relies on his mercy, and depends on the influence of his Spirit? No preacher on morals ever excelled him whose discourse we read in the 5th of Matthew. The promises of God have this end in view—to make us partakers of a Divine nature, by which we have power to perform good works; in fine, the very expectation of heaven produces the effect: "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." The preaching of heathen morality is objectionable because it is defective; it admits of the existence of sin without condemnation, and its terms are remarkably vague in some instances, and too general: it is rather good things concerning virtue than virtue itself. When Scripture morality is stated as the foundation of our justification in the sight of God, this is rejected because it makes ourselves, and not Jesus Christ, our Saviour; justification by faith in our Lord Jesus becomes a nullity,

and the doctrine of grace is treated as if it had no existence, and the following Scripture is totally inverted : "For by grace are ye saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God : not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 8, 9).

When the Ten Commandments are made to bend to man's defective morals we impeach the wisdom of God, who could not frame a law that it would be wise to obey at all times ; we contend with his justice, which is supposed to be too severe, and cavil at his goodness, by attempting to mend that which is the perfection of excellency. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Rom. vii. 12).

When duties are preached as partly obtaining, in union with the merits of Christ, the pardon of sin and a title to eternal glory, it will be found to be the utmost arrogance in making ourselves sharers with Christ in his mediatorial glory ; because pardon is a free gift, our title to blessedness the consequence of the righteousness of God manifest in the flesh ; and all the holiness of our imaginations, dispositions, and conduct is from the influence of his Spirit, *without* whom we had been the children of

wrath, even as others. Yet we are not to separate what God has united. We should be careful to maintain good works while we expect justification through the mediation of the Lord our righteousness. If you have disregarded the holy law of God, be not surprised that his terrors have made you afraid : " Our Lord Jesus came not to be the minister of sin."

But I may address one who wishes to have " respect unto all God's righteous testimonies, and to hate every evil way." Yet you fear that you shall apostatize, because you conceive that your continuance with Christ depends on your own strength : if so, it is not surprising that you judge it hazardous to believe in the Lord Jesus ; for the possibility of now living in his complacent smiles, and shortly after to be frowned into hell, is extremely discouraging. But it should be remembered that saints are kept by *mighty* power through faith unto salvation. " Because I live," saith Jesus, " ye shall live also " (John xiv. 19). The success is not from your feeble efforts, but from the power of the Saviour.

Can you suppose that Christ is either unwilling or unable to grant you perseverance ? Unwilling he cannot be, for he thus speaks : " Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast

given me, be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me : for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world " (John xvii. 24). To obtain the accomplishment of that prayer, Christ must will their perseverance in holiness and union to himself ; for to wish a person happy at the end of his journey is to wish protection, safety, and perseverance in the way.

As to his ability, all things are possible with God ; the whole energies of the influence of the Holy Ghost are with him : " He worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure ; " so that neither life nor death, principalities nor powers, things present nor things to come, can separate us from the love of Christ. But it is not included in my design to vindicate the final perseverance of saints in faith and holiness, a doctrine which, when rightly understood, purifies the soul, and enriches it with heavenly consolation.

But you may now appeal to your own experience by saying, " I thought I had embraced Christ as my Saviour, but he has forsaken me." It is well that the opinions of man are not always the truths of God. If your conduct is *evil*, he will put his hand on his sword and take

hold of vengeance. If your affections towards him are lessened, it proves your ingratitude, but not his inconstancy. We should be careful not to estimate the willingness, ability, and faithfulness of Christ by the fluctuating affections of our souls : it is the word, the covenant, the promise, and the oath of God on which we are to rest.

Persevere in your application to the Redeemer ; for whom he receives he never forsakes. Union with Christ is certain salvation, separation from him certain destruction. Communion with Christ is certain happiness, distance from him certain misery. He acts wisely who, like Esther (approaching a more generous and righteous monarch than Ahasuerus), casts himself at the foot of the cross of Christ, saying, " If I perish, I perish." Do thus, and live for ever. Do thus, and you cannot perish. None have ever perished there ; nor will, through all successive generations.

God is able to make all grace abound towards you. What a delightful thought ! There is no possible exigency into which a Christian may be brought that is not provided against in the adorable Emmanuel. Whatever be your trials or difficulties, dear reader, you need not fear,

if you have the all-sufficient Saviour on your side. Whether you are a Christian or not, you will be tempted by the adversary of souls. Many have been backsliders from the ways of God; many have left their first love, and fallen by temptation. Have you? If so, your experience—if conscience be alive to a sense of the evil of sin and the aggravation of *your own* sin—is inexpressibly distressing. Ah! I think I hear you saying, “I am the guilty character: I have abused the tender mercy of God; I have crucified the Lord Jesus afresh, and put him to an open shame; I have wickedly grieved the Holy Spirit; I have deeply wounded the hearts of my best friends. Base wretch that I am! I am ashamed, I am confounded, whilst I think of my criminal conduct. ‘Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle!’ Oh, sad reverse in my experience! I shall no more see light in the land of the living. God will be favourable to me no more: his mercy is clean gone; I am cast out of his *sight*.” Unhappy man, I pity thee: thy case is

distressing, but not hopeless ; thy sin is aggravated, yet not unpardonable ; for " God is able to make all grace abound towards you." Dear reader, whatever be your case, come now to Jesus Christ, and tell him all your sorrows ; come and confess all your sins ; for he is an all-sufficient Saviour. " Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord ; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you ; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God. Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord ; for I am married unto you. Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings. I will heal their backslidings : I will love them freely."

Rabbi Eliezer said, " Turn to God *one* day before your death." His disciples said, " How can a man know the day of his death ?" He answered them, " Therefore you should turn to God *TO-DAY*. Perhaps you may die *to-morrow*. Thus every day will be employed in returning."

" The name of the Lord is a strong tower : the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (Prov. xviii. 10). Strong indeed ! No one need fear all the malice of hell if he be a child of God.

"Salvation is for walls and bulwarks." "Turn to the stronghold as a prisoner of hope." None can be so happy and none so secure as those whose "life is hid with Christ in God." Should you, dear reader, be one of the unsaved, let me entreat you to come to Jesus now. Come and prove him to be an all-sufficient Saviour. You may be afflicted in body, in mind, or in estate: if so, he can deliver you from all these evils, or, if he sees best, sustain you by his grace and mighty power under their depressing influence; so that, instead of considering them evils, you will count them blessings. If you are troubled about your sins, if you are weighed down by mountains of iniquity, come to Jesus, and you will find that he is able and willing to relieve you of your burden. "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench" (Isa. xlii. 3).

Are you fainting by the way? "Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord" (Psa. xxxi. 24). "The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace" (Psa. xxix. 11).

I would never doubt of the salvation of any *sinner*, since Christ Jesus has died in order that

we might live. The greatest transgressors may be forgiven if they truly repent and confess their sins at the foot of the cross. None have ever perished there ; none ever will perish there. "The Lord will command his loving-kindness in the daytime" (Psa. xlii. 8). He will remember thee, O poor sinner, for good : he will hear the feeblest prayer of the returning prodigal. Come, then, to the throne of grace, and realize the glorious fact that Jesus is an all-sufficient Saviour. Let the following facts, which were stated by the Rev. Mr. Crane, at a missionary meeting in New York city, encourage thee :—

"Not four miles from my residence," said Mr. Crane, "in the western part of this State, there was to be found, a few years since, a most abandoned and profligate set of men, who disregarded religion and despised its power. In the course of Providence, a professor of religion from Connecticut happened to come amongst them. He mourned over their state, and wet his couch with his tears. He prayed unceasingly that he might see the souls of those around him saved. One was finally brought to a knowledge of the truth, and with him joined in prayer. A revival of religion followed ; and soon there were to be numbered fifteen profess-

ing Christians. In answer to their prayers, another increase was experienced. A proposal was then made to send for a missionary that should labour amongst them. To this the aged father of the colony objected, trusting that He who had helped them thus far would not permit them to fail. No minister came amongst them until their number amounted to fifty-four, and they were able to build a church, and settle one with a salary adequate to his support. All this without any preaching, other than the example and prayers of a single Christian."

Some poor sinners say, "If I perish, it is not my fault." The character which God sustains as a Redeemer, united with what I have stated in the former part of this work, proves this objection to be invalid. It is most apparent that there is sufficient encouragement from the mercy of God to render impenitent sinners inexcusable. God, in his goodness, communicates every blessing consistent with his holy government. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." He that believeth is promised security from the world, the flesh, and the devil—he shall "not perish" — and the possession of present

and future good—he shall “have everlasting life.” This declaration is best illustrated by the context ; in fact, it is a literal explanation of what is typically represented. “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so shall the Son of man be lifted up.” For if the lifting up of the serpent was an act of mercy to the whole camp of Israel, both to the obstinate and the compliable, so is the lifting up of Christ ; and as the serpent was sufficient for the healing of every one in the camp of Israel who would look up to it, even so is Jesus lifted up as the Saviour of the world, ready to save every one in the world who applies to him.

Hear his voice from a hill in Palestine—it has reached Britain : “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.” Do you ask how can these things be ? Jehovah replies, “For I am God, and not man.” Our Lord would not have commissioned his disciples to preach the Gospel to every creature if provision had not been made for every creature who applies to him. Sooner expect the ocean drained of its floods than that there should be wanting sufficient encouragement for sinners in seeking mercy.

There is an abundance of encouragement. “The end of ministers’ preaching is to en-

courage poor sinners to believe, and to show how inexcusable they will be who, notwithstanding all, do, through the power of their lusts and unbelief, refuse to come to God in Christ that they may be pardoned. Yea, the laying open of the certainty and fulness of the evidence given makes it plain and conspicuous whence it is men perish in and for their sins. Is it for want of mercy, goodness, grace, or patience in God? Is it through defect in the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ? Is it for want of the mightiest encouragements and most infallible assurances that with God there is forgiveness? Not at all, but merely on the account of their own obstinacy, stubbornness, and perverseness. They will not come unto this light; yea, they hate it, because their deeds are evil. They will not come to Christ that they may have life. It is merely darkness, blindness, and love of sin that bring men to destruction. And this is laid open, and all pretences and excuses are removed, and the shame of men's lusts made naked, by the full confirmation of this truth, which God hath furnished us withal" (Owen on *Psa.* cxxx. 4).

Whoever is in pursuit of happiness is stopped by God, and thus addressed: "Ho! every one *that thirsteth*, come ye to the waters, and he that

hath no money ; come ye, buy and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The last man, and the vilest sinner, who calls on the Lord shall be saved. He saveth to the uttermost : he will in no wise cast out. God does not suggest a reason, and man cannot assign one.

It may further be alleged that God is willing to communicate the influence of his Holy Spirit to those who seek it. Read a most encouraging passage in Luke xi. 11—13 : "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone ? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent ? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion ? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children : how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him ?" The tenderest paternal sympathies exist in God towards his children : be obedient, and you must be happy.

To render himself excusable, a sinner may object, "This is a blessing communicated to penitent, believing sinners." Let this be admitted :

what is your conclusion? "I am neither a penitent, nor a believer; the blessing is therefore not mine." If so, you most certainly cannot receive the blessing. Yet this will not prove that you are inexcusable: every sinner is obliged to become a penitent, by the unalterable decree of God, or perish. Eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ: if the Saviour is rejected, the blessing is lost. How will you acquit yourself at the bar of God, at the bar of that God who has said, "He that believeth not shall be damned;" especially when you have heard of the sufficiency of the sacrifice of Christ to obliterate sin, and the encouragement which has been given to sinners to repent and believe? Were God to forgive without repentance and faith, it would involve his government in absurdity. Can it be imagined that the prayer of hypocrisy would or should be heard? For either to confess sin without repentance, or to profess faith in Christ without relying on his mediation for salvation, is hypocrisy. And will God encourage hypocrites? God will not, nor cannot encourage such without encouraging hypocrisy.

Should it still be said, "I am no hypocrite, *but am altogether disinclined to use the means*

of grace," recollect that this disinclination is your sin. "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin : but now they have no cloke for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works that none other man did, they had not had sin : but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled, They hated me without a cause" (John xv. 22—25). What cause have you to hate Jesus? Had you lived in the days of the incarnation of our Lord, and had been told that a fulness of blessings was treasured up in him, and that he was disposed to communicate happiness to the miserable of every description, and you had been lying on your couch ill of a fever, when, hearing a knocking at the door, the voice of Jesus entered your ears, "Open the door, and I will heal all thy diseases," to have forbidden him entrance would have justly cost you your life. You are spiritually diseased; Jesus saith now to you, "Come unto me : I have an infinite fulness of blessings : I am disposed liberally to communicate them." Will you not ask for them? Will you not receive them? You say, "I am disinclined;" but why are

you disinclined ? Is your disinclination founded either on reason or justice ? will this excuse be admissible at the great day ? Could you look Jesus in the face, and say to him, as the heavens passed away, " I would not come unto thee that I might have life." Oh, that the Spirit would convince you of sin, because you believe not in Christ, that you might see your sin in violating an universal command, refusing an unlimited invitation, resisting the highest possible encouragement, and despising infinite and eternal sanctions. If I cannot prevail, permit me to weep over you.

I will add but one thing more : the testimony of Jesus proves that you are inexcusable. You may resume your objection—" If I perish, it is not my fault." Let us hear Jesus assign the cause of a sinner's condemnation : " Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life." Here our Lord blames the sinner because he is disinclined. You may parry my attempts to pierce your conscience, but " the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and *intent*s of the heart ; neither is there any creature

that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." What he attributed to those who would not come unto him he will attribute unto you : " I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." If you can excuse yourself for hating God (for that is the cause of your impenitence, unbelief, and disinclination to use the means of grace), then I cease to plead with you. Yet will it be found *vain* to throw the blame on God, or contend with Jesus, by whom every excuse will be answered, every objection invalidated, and his government vindicated from every aspersion. " So a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel, because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation" (Psa. lxxviii. 22).

Dear reader, come to Jesus Christ just as you are, and he will save you. Do not question his willingness, do not doubt his power. " Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him " (Psa. lxxxv. 9). " As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him" (Psa. ciii. 11). "*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners ; of whom I am chief.*"

Look to Calvary's cross, to the crucified One,
and leave at the foot of his cross your burdens
and your sins.

OPPRESS'D with noon-day's scorching heat,
To yonder cross I flee ;
Beneath its shelter take my seat :
No shade like this for me !

Beneath that cross clear waters burst,
A fountain sparkling free ;
And there I quench my desert thirst :
No spring like this for me !

A stranger here, I pitch my tent
Beneath this spreading tree ;
Here shall my pilgrim life be spent :
No home like this for me !

For burden'd ones a resting-place
Beside that cross I see ;
Here I cast off my weariness :
No rest like this for me !

JESUS CHRIST AN EVERLASTING SAVIOUR.

JESUS CHRIST loves his people with an everlasting love. What a precious truth ! What can better support and sustain believers amid the trials of their pilgrimage than the thought that Jesus is an everlasting Saviour. "Through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Eph. ii. 18) ; by him our feeble prayers are presented to the Father. He pleads with the Father for us, and through him we receive the pardon and forgiveness of all our sins. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us" (Gal. iii. 13). Whatever sins we have committed we may obtain pardon thereof through Jesus Christ. However great and

aggravated our crimes, we may be saved with an everlasting salvation if we seek forgiveness in God's way. It will be well for us if we can truly say, "Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us" (Eph. v. 2).

God thinks upon his people for good ; he does not forget them. His language to them is, "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me ;" and all his promises are, like himself, unchangeable. "For I am the Lord, I change not ; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Mal. iii. 6). "The Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James i. 17).

Some object to salvation, and say, "It is apparent that Jesus is both willing and able to save ; but I know not what to do." The gaoler asked an important question when he said, "What must I do to be saved ?" This is now become your inquiry. The sacred volume lies before you ; consult it ; "Search the Scriptures." In its perusal conscientiously abide by your convictions : "he that doeth my will shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." With indefatigable attention continue, "then shall ye know if ye follow on to know the Lord."

There are some parts of the sacred Scripture which are more particularly suited to you at this time. Read the account of the state of man as a sinner ; see Paul's Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians. Inquire whether man has not lost the moral image of God, and is by nature destitute of holy principles, "sensual, not having the Spirit ;" whether for sin he is not exposed to future woe, a "child of wrath." From hence may arise a conviction of the necessity of faith in Jesus, that you may be saved from the wrath to come, and of the importance of being born again, that you may be made both holy and happy. Much depends on just views of man as a sinner before the Lord.

Examine whether there be not an absolute necessity that *you* should believe in Christ. God hath concluded all under sin ; consequently you are not guiltless.

Inquire into the suitableness of the Saviour's mediation. You acknowledge your guilt to be great, then inquire whether the merit of his sacrifice be not equal to the demerit of your sin. You complain of multitudes of sins ; ask whether he can blot them all out. You feel yourself unholy as well as guilty ; does not Jesus bless us in turning every one of us from our sins ?

You are penetrated with deep conviction of sins "he dwelleth in the contrite spirit." You are ignorant ; he is wise. You are guilty ; he is merciful. You are unholy ; he can make you clean.

Nevertheless, your question is not answered, "What must I do to be saved?" Renounce every other hope, and place entirely your confidence in Christ for salvation. There are those who, taking their whole life together, hope that their good conduct will preponderate, and endeavour thus to compromise with God. "But salvation is not of works which we have done." Others place their hope in some brilliant actions of their lives, and conceive that these will cancel the guilt of all their offences. The eminent devotion of David did not put away the sword which was to punish him for adultery and murder. Nor can your attention to the means of grace save you. To be diligent in the perusal of the Scriptures, constant in prayer, regular in public worship, is truly commendable ; but these are means of grace only, and no more : they were never intended to redeem, but to lead you to the Redeemer.

But you are free from scandalous and flagitious *sins*: this is a great blessing ; it delivers you *from much anguish and torment of conscience,*

and from being hurtful to others. You reason right when you maintain that those who continue to live in sin cannot be saved. Yet men may be free from scandalous and flagitious sins, and yet not be saved. The Pharisees were freed from many impieties, and yet our Lord says, "Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven;" and the apostle Paul thus speaks: "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: as touching the law, a Pharisee; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Phil. iii. 4—9).

Perhaps in the judgment of others you have been held in high esteem, and therefore feel indisposed to renounce your own righteousness

as the basis of your hope of future happiness. Yet for you to prefer, as a title to heaven, your own imperfect works to the perfect righteousness of Christ, will not exalt you in the esteem either of holy men or of God.

It may be objected that of late you have been altered for the better. Improvement is desirable and pleasant in all. No man can have solid hopes of heaven whose life is not reformed ; but if you have not seen your state by nature and practice, and are not desirous of pardon through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, you have to answer for all past sins. The present loyalty of a regicide does not cancel past treasons.

Will you say there are many greater sinners than yourself? that you never did any one any harm? I answer, it is a blessing not to be so wicked as some are ; your punishment will be less than that of others. God is less dishonoured, and you are delivered from much misery ; yet you should consider that all who do not believe in Christ are under the displeasure of God because they have not believed on the only begotten Son of God. If, therefore, you would be happy, recollect and follow the advice of Paul to the gaoler : “ Believe on the *Lord Jesus Christ.*”

It is also of importance that you should attempt no one thing without dependence on the Spirit of Christ. While our redemption is through the blood of the Lamb, our union to him, and all our holy affections and actions, result from the influence of his Spirit ; so the apostle affirms : “ I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ; and the life that I live in the flesh is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

The influence of the Spirit of Christ on the human soul is unlike the laws of nature, which are universally obeyed, and obeyed by things and beings who are unconscious of the power by which they are influenced. The mind of man is swayed by arguments and motives, and our dependence on God, our voluntary dependence on the mediation of his Son, is essential to salvation : “ We are thus made willing in the day of his power.” Observe, in the following sentence, how the Holy Spirit states the subject : “ Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling ; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.” You have here your duty—it is to work ; and your resources—it is God that worketh in you ; therefore to combine the most assiduous attention

and active exertions with habitual dependence on the Spirit of Christ is your duty, and will prove your eternal happiness.

As you are not in complete despair, be thankful for the least hope which animates your soul. As we have no right to demand salvation of God, even when we possess it, it is for God to give us as much comfort as he pleases. Let us then be thankful for a little ; gratitude is the sweetest offering which we can present to God ; and he who blesses God for a few mercies will ere long praise him for a multitude.

After having thus renounced your own righteousness, and been thankful for the little hope which you have of salvation, devote yourself unreservedly to the service of your Redeemer. He who calls Jesus Lord whilst his spirit and conduct are unholy is like Herod : he places a crown of thorns upon his head, a reed in his hands, and sets him at nought.

You must submit to his authority, obey his precepts, and live devoted to his service, or your faith will be presumption, your hope delusion, your life disgraceful, your death uncomfortable, and your final destination infinitely dreadful. Therefore give yourself unto the Lord according to the will of God : this done, your

success is certain. "He that believeth shall be saved."

Sin has ruined man ; the law condemns him, but grace saves him. Sin has brought man down from his original estate, stripped him of his glory, and taken the crown from his head. The Saviour reinstates the humble penitent, and puts glory and honour upon him. "By sin death entered into the world," and was crowned "the king of terrors." In consequence of sin Adam and Eve were expelled from Paradise ; the deluge came in consequence of sin ; Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed through sin ; and all the evils to which mankind are now subject arise from sin. The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain through sin. The soul of man has become defiled, robbed of the image of God, and banished from his presence through sin. What a wretched condition for man to be placed in ! What a fearful state for sinners ! What a dark future for the ungodly and impenitent to anticipate ! All who live and die without knowing Jesus Christ as the Saviour will have reason to tremble before the righteous Judge at last.

Dear reader, allow me to ask you if you are saved, if you have sought and obtained pardon,

if you have a good hope through grace of everlasting life. If not, I would not be in your position for ten thousand worlds. Your life cannot be a happy one ; your death will be a most miserable one, unless you repent. Think now about the salvation of your never-dying soul ; do not banish this subject from your mind, because the time may be near at hand when you must look death in the face and appear at the judgment-seat of Christ ; and then how will you bear to see the just Judge of all, to see Jesus Christ, whom you have despised and neglected ? What an awful day will the day of judgment prove to many ! What will it be to you ?

A celebrated preacher of the seventeenth century, in a sermon to a crowded audience, described the terrors of the last judgment with such eloquence, pathos, and force of action that some of his audience not only burst into tears, but sent forth piercing cries, as if the Judge himself had been present, and was about to pass upon them their final sentence. In the height of this commotion, the preacher called upon them to dry their tears and cease their cries, as he was about to add something still more awful and astonishing than anything he *had* yet brought before them. Silence being

obtained, he, with an agitated countenance and solemn voice, addressed them thus: "In one quarter of an hour from this time, the emotions which you have just now exhibited will be stifled; the remembrance of the fearful truths which excited them will vanish; you will return to your carnal occupations, or sinful pleasures, with your usual avidity, and you will treat all you have heard 'as a tale that is told!'"

Examine yourself, dear reader, and see if you are the subject of a Divine change—if you are born again. No outward observances will make up for the want of this. "*The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*" (Rom. xiv. 17).

A sinner may attend to many religious duties, and yet be unconverted. Some have been under very deep impression of sin—they have been almost persuaded to be Christians—but have allowed the world to engage once more all their time and affections.

Thus far have I often known convictions and impressions to arise (if I might judge by the strongest appearances), which, after all, have worn off again. Some unhappy circumstances of external temptation, ever joined by the inward reluctance of an unsanctified heart to this

holy and humbling scheme of redemption, have been the ruin of multitudes ; and, through the deceitfulness of sin, they have been hardened, till they seem to have been "utterly destroyed, and that without remedy." And therefore, O thou immortal creature who art reading these lines, I beseech that, while affairs are in this critical situation, while there are these balancings of mind between accepting and rejecting that glorious Gospel which, in the integrity of my heart, I have now been laying before you, you would once more give me an attentive audience while I plead in God's behalf, shall I say? or rather in your own ; while, "as an ambassador from Christ, and as though God did beseech you by me, I pray you, in Christ's stead," that you would "be reconciled to God," and would not, after these awakenings and these inquiries, by a madness which it will surely be the doleful business of a miserable eternity to lament, reject this compassionate counsel of God towards you.

One would indeed imagine there should be no need of importunity here. One would conclude that, as soon as perishing sinners are told that an offended God is ready to be reconciled, *that he offers them a full pardon for all their*

aggravated sins, yea, that he is willing to adopt them into his family now, that he may, at length, admit them into his heavenly presence, all should, with the utmost readiness and pleasure, embrace so kind a message, and fall at his feet in speechless transports of astonishment, gratitude, and joy. But, alas ! we find it much otherwise. We see multitudes quite unmoved, and the impressions which are made on many more are feeble and transient. Lest it should be thus with you, O reader, let me urge the message with which I am charged : let me entreat you to be reconciled to God, and to accept of pardon and salvation in the way in which it is so freely offered to you.

I entreat you by the majesty of that God in whose name I come, whose voice fills all heaven with reverence and obedience. He speaks not in vain to legions of angels ; but, if there could be any contention among these blessed spirits, it would be, who should be first to execute his commands. Oh, let him not speak in vain to a wretched mortal ! I entreat you by the terrors of his wrath, who could speak to you in thunder, who could, by one single act of his will, cut off this precarious life of yours, and send you down to hell ; I beseech you by his

mercies, by his tender mercies, by the bowels of his compassion, which still yearn over you as those of a parent over a dear son, over a tender child whom, notwithstanding his former ungrateful rebellion, he earnestly remembers still ; I beseech and entreat you, by all his paternal goodness, that you do not, as it were, compel him to lose the character of the gentle Parent in that of the righteous Judge, so that (as he threatens with regard to those whom he had just called his sons and daughters) a fire shall be kindled in his anger, which shall burn unto the lowest hell.

I beseech you, further, by the name and love of our dying Saviour. I beseech you by all the condescension of his incarnation ; by that poverty to which he voluntarily submitted, that you might be enriched with eternal treasures ; by all the gracious invitations which he gave, which still sound in his words, and still coming, as it were, warm from his heart are sweeter than honey or the honey-comb. I beseech you by all his glorious works of power and of wonder, which were also works of love. I beseech you by the memory of the most benevolent person, and the most generous friend. I beseech *you* by the memory of what he suffered, as well

as of what he said and did ; by the agony which he endured in the garden, when his body was covered with a dew of blood. I beseech you by all that tender distress which he felt when his dearest friends forsook him and fled, and his bloodthirsty enemies dragged him away, like the meanest of slaves, and like the vilest of criminals. I beseech you by the blows and bruises, by the stripes and lashes, which this injured Sovereign endured while in their rebellious hands ; by the shame of spitting, from which he hid not that kind and venerable countenance. I beseech you by the purple robe, the sceptre of reed, and the crown of thorns, which this King of Glory wore, that he might set us among the princes of heaven. I beseech you by the heavy burden of the cross, under which he panted and toiled and fainted, in the painful way to Golgotha, that he might free us from the burden of our sins. I beseech you by the remembrance of those rude nails, that tore the veins and arteries, the nerves and tendons, of those sacred hands and feet ; and by that invincible, that triumphant goodness, which, while the iron pierced his flesh, engaged him to cry out, " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." I beseech you by that unutter-

able anguish which he bore, when lifted up upon the cross, and extended there as on a rack for six painful hours, that you open your heart to those attractive influences which have drawn to him thousands and ten thousands. I beseech you by all that insult and derision which the Lord of Glory bore there; by that parching thirst, which could hardly obtain the relief of vinegar; by that doleful cry, so astonishing in the mouth of the only begotten of the Father—"My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" I beseech you by that grace that subdued and pardoned a dying malefactor, by that compassion for sinners, by that compassion for you, which wrought in his heart, long as its vital motion continued, and which ended not when he bowed his head, saying, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost. I beseech you by the triumphs of that resurrection by which he was "declared to be the Son of God, with power, by the Spirit of holiness," which wrought to accomplish it; by that gracious tenderness which attempered all those triumphs, when he said to her out of whom he had cast seven devils, concerning his disciples, who had treated *him* so basely, "Go, tell my brethren, I ascend *unto my Father* and your Father, unto my God

and your God." I beseech you by that condescension with which he said to Thomas, when his unbelief had made such an unreasonable demand, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands ; and reach hither thine hand, and thrust it into my side ; and be not faithless, but believing." I beseech you by that generous and faithful care of his people which he carried up with him to the regions of glory, and engaged him to send down his Spirit in that rich profusion of miraculous gifts to spread the progress of his saving Word. I beseech you by that voice of sympathy and power with which he said to Saul, while injuring his church, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ?" by that generous goodness which spared that prostrate enemy when he lay trembling at his feet, and raised him to so high a dignity as to be not inferior to the very chiefest apostles. I beseech you by the memory of all that Christ hath already done, by the expectation of all he will farther do, for his people. I beseech you, at once, by the sceptre of his grace, and by the sword of his justice, with which all his incorrigible enemies shall be slain before him, that you do not trifle away these precious moments, while his Spirit is thus breathing upon you ; that

you do not lose an opportunity which may never return, and on the improvement of which your eternity depends.

I beseech you by all the bowels of compassion which you owe to the faithful ministers of Christ, who are studying and labouring, preaching and praying, wearing out their time, exhausting their strength, and very probably shortening their lives, for the salvation of your soul, and of souls like yours. I beseech you by the affection with which all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity long to see you brought back to him. I beseech you by the friendship of the living, and by the memory of the dead ; by the ruin of those who have trifled away their days, and are perished in their sins, and by the happiness of those who have embraced the Gospel and are saved by it. I beseech you by the great expectation of that important day, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven ; by the terrors of a dissolving world ; by the sound of the archangel's trumpet ; and of that infinitely more awful sentence, "Come, ye blessed," and "Depart, ye cursed," with which that awful solemnity shall close.

I beseech you, finally, by your own precious and immortal soul ; by the sure prospect of a

dying bed, or of a sudden surprise into the invisible state ; and as you would feel one spark of comfort in your departing spirit, when your flesh and your heart are failing. I beseech you by your own personal appearance before the tribunal of Christ (for a personal appearance it must be, even to them who now sit on thrones of their own) ; by all the transports of the blessed, and by all the agonies of the damned, the one or the other of which must be your everlasting portion. I affectionately entreat and beseech you, in the strength of all these united considerations, as you will answer it to me, who may, in that day, be summoned to testify against you, and, which is unspeakably more, as you will answer it to your own conscience, as you will answer it to the Eternal Judge, that you dismiss not these thoughts, these meditations, and these cares, till you have brought matters to a happy issue ; till you have made a resolute choice of Christ, and his appointed way of salvation, and till you have solemnly devoted yourself to God, in the bonds of an everlasting covenant.

And thus I leave the matter before you, and before the Lord. I have told you my errand ; I have discharged my embassy. Stronger arguments I cannot use, more endearing and more

awful considerations I cannot suggest. Choose, therefore, whether you will go out, as it were, clothed in sackcloth, to cast yourself at the feet of Him who now sends you these gracious terms of peace and pardon, or whether you will hold it out till he appears sword in hand, to reckon with you for your treasons and your crimes, and for this neglected embassy. Fain would I hope for the best: nor can I believe that this labour of love shall be so entirely unsuccessful, that not one soul shall be brought to the foot of Christ in cordial submission and humble faith. "Take with you, therefore, words, and turn unto the Lord."

The blessed Redeemer begins the work of salvation in the soul, and he carries on that work. He completes all that he begins; he is able to save from sin, to preserve all who trust in him, when sorely tempted by the wicked one. He is a present Saviour. He is an everlasting Saviour. The child of God often says, My enemies are many—their name is legion; Satan, the great adversary, the world and the world's trinity—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life: but "He that is *for* me is greater than all that can be *against* me," "Christ *the power of God*," "I that speak in righteous-

ness, *mighty* to save !" What a pillow is the power of Jesus to rest upon ! What strong arms are the arms of Infinite Love to be supported in ! What riches of Divine love are there in the everlasting Saviour to encourage and cheer every trembling sinner who comes seeking pardon at the foot of the Cross ! I rejoice to know that there is a Saviour ; that Jesus Christ is an everlasting Saviour ; that none who are saved by him can perish ; that all who have been justified will be sanctified, and ultimately glorified. Do you, dear reader, do you feel interested in these glorious facts ? Do you delight in communion with the Father and with the Son ? Do you feel yourself more and more sensible of the presence of God ; and does that sense grow more delightful to you than it formerly was ? Can you, even when your natural spirits are weak and low, and you are not in any frame for the ardours and ecstasies of devotion, nevertheless find a pleasing rest, a calm repose of heart, in the thought that God is near you, and that he sees the secret sentiments of your soul, while you are, as it were, labouring up the hill, and casting a longing eye towards him, though you cannot say you enjoy any sensible communications from him ? Is it agreeable to you to open your heart to his

inspection and regard, to present it to him laid bare of every disguise, and to say with David, "Thou, Lord, knowest thy servant?" Do you find a growing esteem and approbation of that sacred law of God which is the transcript of his moral perfections? Do you inwardly esteem all his precepts concerning all things to be right? Do you discern not only the necessity, but the reasonableness, the beauty, the pleasure of obedience, and feel a growing scorn and contempt of those things which may be offered as the price of your innocence, and would tempt you to sacrifice or to hazard your interest in the Divine favour and friendship?

Allow me to speak plainly to you before you close this book: settle the matter of salvation between yourself and God. Are you saved? if not, go down upon your knees, and ask God, for Christ's sake, to save you with an everlasting salvation. Whether you are or not a stranger to me, I care not: I have a message for you; and it is this: Repent, believe, and be saved. My duty is to direct you to the Divine Redeemer, and to ask you, "What is the state of your soul?" Every Christian should sow seed by all waters, for he knows not which shall prosper, *either this or that*, or whether both shall be alike

good. A word fitly spoken, how good is it, like "apples of gold in pictures of silver." A few words about the soul's safety have led some to examination, inquiry, and resulted in everlasting deliverance and felicity.

One day, as Felix Neff was walking in a street in the city of Lausanne, he saw at a distance a man whom he took for one of his friends. He ran behind him, tapped him on the shoulder, before looking him in his face, and asked him, "What is the state of your soul, my friend?" The stranger turned; Neff perceived his error, apologized, and went his way. About three or four years afterwards, a person came to Neff, and accosted him, saying he was indebted to him for his inestimable kindness. Neff did not recognise the man, and begged he would explain. The stranger replied, "Have you forgotten an unknown person, whose shoulder you touched in the street in Lausanne, asking him, 'How do you find your soul?' It was I; your question led me to serious reflections; and *now I find it is well with my soul.*" This proves what apparently small means may be blessed of God for the conversion of sinners, and how many opportunities for doing good we are continually letting slip, and which thus pass irrevocably beyond our reach.

One of the questions which every Christian should propose to himself, on setting out on a journey, is, "What opportunities shall I have to do good?" And one of the points on which he should examine himself on his return is, "What opportunities have I lost?"

"In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore" (Psa. xvi. 12). What a precious thought for the believer: joy on earth, fulness of joy in heaven! The foretaste is blessed; what must be the *fruition!*

O glorious state! Who would sell thee for dreams and shadows? Who would be enticed or affrighted from thee? Who would not strive and fight, and watch and run, and that with violence, even to the last breath, in order to obtain thee? Surely none but those that know thee not, and believe not thy glory.

Consider the joy which the saved are the subjects of at God's right hand. Love, desire, hope, and courage, all tend to raise our joy. This is so desirable to every man by nature, and so essentially necessary to constitute our happiness, that I hope I need not say much to persuade you to anything that would make your *life delightful*. Supposing you, therefore, already

convinced that the pleasures of the flesh are brutish and perishing, and that your solid and lasting joy must be from Heaven, instead of persuading, I will proceed in directing. Reader, if thou hast managed well the former work, thou art got within sight of thy rest ; thou believest the truth of it ; thou art convinced of its excellencies ; thou art fallen in love with it ; thou longest after it ; thou hopest for it ; and thou art resolved to venture courageously for obtaining it. But is there any work for joy in this ? We delight in the good we possess ; it is present good that is the object of joy : and thou wilt say, *Alas ! I am yet without it.* But think a little farther with thyself. Is it nothing to have a deed of gift from God ? Is it nothing to live in daily expectation of entering into the kingdom ? Is not my assurance of being hereafter glorified a sufficient ground for inexpressible joy ? Is it not a delight for the heir of a kingdom to think of what he must soon possess, though at present he little differs from a servant ? Have we not both command and example for *rejoicing in hope of the glory of God ?* (Rom. v. 2 ; xii. 12.)

Here, then, reader, carry thy heart to the top of the highest mount ; show it the kingdom of

Christ, and the glory of it, and say to it, "All this will thy Lord give thee, who hast believed in him, and been a worshipper of him. *It is the Father's good pleasure to give thee this kingdom* (Luke xii. 32). Seest thou this astonishing glory which is above thee? All this is thy own inheritance. This crown is thine; these pleasures are thine; this company, this beautiful place, are all thine; because thou art Christ's, and Christ is thine: when thou wast united to him, thou hadst all these with him." Thus take thy heart into the land of promise; show it the pleasant hills and fruitful valleys; show it the clusters of grapes which thou hast gathered, to convince it that it is a blessed land, flowing with better than milk and honey. Enter the gates of the holy city; walk through the streets of the new Jerusalem; walk about Zion, and go round about her; number the towers thereof, mark well her bulwarks; consider her palaces, that thou mayest tell it to thy soul (Psa. xlviii. 12, 13). Hath it not the glory of God, and is not her light like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper-stone, clear as crystal? See the twelve foundations of her walls, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And the *building* of the walls of it are of jasper; and the

city is pure gold like unto clear glass ; and the foundations are garnished with all manner of precious stones. And the twelve gates are twelve pearls, every several gate is of one pearl ; and the street of the city is of pure gold, as it were transparent glass. There is no temple in it ; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. It hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, in it ; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof ; and the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it. These sayings are faithful and true ; and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angels and his own Son to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done (Rev. xxii. 11-24 ; xxii. 26). Say now to all this, " This is thy rest, O my soul ! and this must be the place of thy everlasting habitation." Let all the sons of Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Jerusalem be glad ; for great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion ; God is known in her palaces for a refuge (Psa. xlviii. 1-3).

Jesus Christ waits to be gracious ; he is willing, he is able to save every poor sinner who

confesses his sin with a humble, penitent, and lowly mind. He loves his people with an everlasting love. "He that loved his people," says a now glorified saint, "out of darkness, loves them into everlasting light." Dear reader, if you have not come to Jesus, and found him to be *a precious, a pleading, a willing, a present, an all-sufficient, an everlasting Saviour*, come now; come to him *without* delay. Do not doubt his power to save you; do not question his willingness: believe his gracious declaration and live: "*Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*"

COME, ye sinners, poor and wretched,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore !
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity joined with power.
He is able ;
He is willing : doubt no more.

Ho ! ye needy, come and welcome !
God's free bounty glorify.

Jesus Christ an Everlasting Saviour. 177

True belief and true repentance,
Every grace that brings us nigh,
Without money,
Come to Jesus Christ and buy.

Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream :
All the fitness he requireth
Is to feel your need of him.
This he gives you ;
'Tis the Spirit's rising beam.

Come, ye weary, heavy laden,
Bruised and mangled by the fall !
If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all.
Not the righteous,
Sinners Jesus came to call.

Agonizing in the garden,
Lo ! your Saviour prostrate lies.
On the bloody tree behold him ;
Hear him cry before he dies,
“ It is finished ! ”
Finished, the great sacrifice !

Lo ! the incarnate God, ascended,
Pleads the merit of his blood.
Venture on him, venture wholly :
Let no other trust intrude.
None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good.

Saints and angels, joined in concert,
Sing the praises of the Lamb ;
While the blissful seats of heaven
Sweetly echo with his name.
Hallelujah !
Sinners here may sing the same.

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